# Divine Breathings:

OR

A MANUAL of

## Practical Contemplations,

In One Century,

Tending to promote Gospel-Principles, and a good Conversation in Christ.

Comprizing in brief many of those great Truths that are to be known and practised by a Christian.

## The Second Part.

*T. S.*

*——Si quid novisti rectius istis,*
*Candidus imperti, si non, his utere mecum*

*LONDON*,

Printed for *Nathaniel Ponder*, at the *Peacock*, in the *Poultrey*, near the Church, 1680.

# TO THE READER.

AS *it ſhould be our work to get our Judgments inform'd, ſo our converſation reform'd: As we ſhould get our heads fill'd with Goſpel-light, ſo our lives ſhould be fill'd with Goſpel-holineſs: And as we ſhould hold faſt that which is good, ſo we ſhould hold forth that which is good.* *Saith* Paul *of the* Corinthians, 2 *Cor.* 3. 3. Ye are manifeſtly declared to be Epiſtles of Chriſt, miniſtred by us, written not with Ink, but with the Spirit of the Living God; not in Tables of ſtone, but in the fleſhly Tables of the heart. *And of the* Theſſalonians, 1 *Theſ.* 1. 8. From you ſounded out the Word of the Lord, not onely in *Macedonia*, and *Achaia*, but alſo in every place your faith to Godward is ſpread abroad. *This is the Com-*

*mendation of a Christian, to have Truth writ in his heart, and read in his life. Saith the same Apostle of the* Romans, *Rom.* 6.17. Ye have obeyed from the heart that form of Doctrine εἰς ὃν παρεδόθητε, into which you were delivered. *To have doctrine not only delivered to us, but to be delivered up into that Doctrine, so as to be fram'd and moulded into the fashion of it, is that we should labour after. How far these ensuing sheets tend to promote this work, I leave to be considered. Now that our hearts may be so sanctifi'd by Truth, as that we may obey Truth from the heart, is the Prayer of thy*

Well-wisher,

T. S.

# An Alphabetical Table referring to the principal things contain'd in these Contemplations to which the figures direct.

---

## A


*Access, Believers have access to God with boldness.* Contemp. 51

*Afflictions, to prepare for them before they come, and to improve them when come, and how to do it.* 62

*God the Author of them.* 61

*The common failings of the people of God under them.* 63

*That it is easier to discern the Righteousness of God, than his Good-*




*ness*

*neſs in them.* 64
*They may be continued after cleanſing work, and why?* 65

*B*

*Brazen Serpent, how a Type of Chriſt.* 18
*Bondage, when from the Spirit, and when not.* 75

*C*

*Care, what care a Chriſtian ſhould take? and what not?* 86
*Chriſt, how to be received.* 17, 19
*That there is to be a continual receiving of him.* 20
*That there is to be a walking in him as we have received him.* 21
*Thoſe that would have Chriſt receive them when they die, muſt receive Chriſt whilſt they live.* 40
*Chriſt lives in the weakeſt Believer, and what uſe to be made of it.* 29
*Believers too apt to live upon ſomething*

*thing short of Christ, as their own resolutions, their graces received, and their present attainments.* 81

*Some question their closing with him, because they fear their ends were not right.* 73

*Communion with God prov'd, with a description of those that enjoy it.* 30

*Consideration of use in order to conconversion.* 3

*Convictions, what waies persons shift out of them.* 4

*Conversation, what it is to have a good conversation in Christ.* 41

## D

*Darkness, a Saint may be under darkness, yet then 'tis his duty to trust in God.* 71

*Dead, we must distinguish between a dead frame, and a dead state.* 76

*Deſires, what thoſe are that argue true Grace, and what not.* 7
*Duties call for the exerciſe of proper graces.* 93
*Three duties of great concernment, which tend much to promote each the other.* 82

E

*Election, the doctrine thereof ſhould not hinder, but further our going to Chriſt.* 12
*Experiences, great uſe to be made both of our own, and the experiences of others.* 92

F

*Faith, a Chriſtian is to live by Faith, and why?* 36
*What it is to live by Faith?* 37
*Faith to be exerciſed in the want of ſpiritual feeling.* 38
*That we ſhould die in Faith, as well as*

*as live by Faith, and what it is so to die?* 39
*Some sincere souls question Faith, because they feel corruptions working.* 69
*Some because they want comfort with something propounded by way of relief.* 70
*Fear, holy Fear and Joy mutually promote each the other.* 85

## G

*God, unchangeable in his Love to his Children, though he may change his dispensation.* 60
*Godliness, wherein the power thereof consisteth?* 42
*Good, a Child of God shall want no good thing.* 46
*Grace to be exercised suitable to the various seasons and conditions we are under.* 93
*How it grows?* 94
*Grown Faith of great advantage as to its use.* 95.

*Many Believers ſpend that time in queſtioning whether they have grace, which they ſhould ſpend in ſing of grace.* 74

## H

*Holineſs rewarded here as well as hereafter.* 50

## I

Jeruſalem, *why all* Jeruſalem *troubled at the birth of Chriſt?* 59
*Juſtice exerciſed as well as Mercy in the pardon of ſin.* 13
*Juſtification, the Doctrine of it opened.* 22, 23
*The ſeeming difference between* Paul *and* James *about Juſtification reconciled.* 24
*Many clear in the doctrinal part, yet fail as to the practical part, and wherein?* 26

## K

*Knowledge and Practice to be joyned together.* 1

## L

*Law, how under it, and how not under it?* 98
*Life, Spiritual Life, wherein it consisteth?* 2
*Also described, with the excellency of it.* 27, 28
*Light, persons dignified from it.* 49
*Mercy when out of common providence, or special love.* 44,96
*Where God gives one mercy out of Love, he gives more.* 43
*How to raise an high esteem of mercy &c?* 45
*Mortification, how we are to mortifie sin?* 33,34,35
*Especially our iniquity.* 66
*Why persons meet with so little success*

*ceſs in mortifying of ſin?* 67
*Encouragements as to the mortifying of ſin.* 68

## O

*Ordinances, ſome have too low thoughts, and ſome too high thoughts of them, and wherein?* 80
*Some complain of the want of a bleſſing in them, becauſe they overlook the bleſſing.* 78
*Some under a temptation to keep from them, becauſe not prepared.* 79

## P

*Pardon, the abounding grace of God in pardoning ſin.* 9
*Precept to be brought to a Promiſe, and pleaded in Prayer.* 52
*Power, many pretend want of power to come to Chriſt, when 'tis of will.* 5

*Pride sometimes mistaken for humility, and wherein?* 10
*Praise to be rendred through Christ.* 47
*Prayer, several Arguments to raise Faith in Prayer.* 97
*Prayer, not to inform God, but to make us sensible of our wants.* 53
*What it is to pray in the Spirit?* 54
*We are not to neglect means in the use of Prayer, or Prayer in the use of means.* 55
*What doubts they are that hinder Prayer?* 56
*We must look after the return of Prayer.* 57
*How to judge of the Answer of Prayer?* 58
*Promises, what use to make of them in going to Christ?* 14
*How rightly to improve them?* 15
*We must distinguish between comfort in a Promise, and Christ in a Promise.* 16

That

*That which gives propriety in a Promise, is the accepting of it.* 88
*Promises to be made use of, though corruption be high, and grace low.* 89
*They are free and firm, and why so?* 91

## Q

*Qualifications, how to judge of them in reference to Promises?* 89
*Quench the Spirit of God, how quenched?* 77

## R

*Repentance to be a continued work, and how thereby it comes to be refined, and made more Evangelical?* 32
*Righteousness, all Believers equally interested in the Righteousness of Christ.* 25

S

*Saints, all the Saints of God his first-born, and Heirs, with the reason of it.* 100
*Sin should not hinder from going to Christ.* 8
*In turning from sin, we should turn to God in Christ, and not to our own righteousness.* 11
*Sorrow for sin to be greatest sorrow, and wherein it exceeds other sor-*
*Scripture, many wrested and mistaken.* 6
*row that seems greater.* 31
*Spirit of God a Spirit of Liberty, and wherein.* 98
*How quenched?* 77

T

*Talents to be improved, and work to be finished.* 48
*Teachings, the excellency of the Teachings of God, and wherein they*

*they transcend all other Teachings.* 99
*Trust, we must trust in God both in the absence and presence of means.* 83

*W*

*Works to be finished up.* 48
*How a Christian may make his work easie, and his life fruitful?* 84

# PRACTICAL CONTEMPLATIONS.

## *Contemplation* I.

AS light is pleaſant to the eye, ſo is knowledge to the mind; therefore men according to their inclinations, bend their ſtudies for the increaſe thereof; amongſt whom, many pitch upon Divinity, and though ſome after long ſtudy, remain very ignorant in truths of neer & great concernment, as I have heard of a Senior fellow and a noted Græcian, that reading in the N. Teſtament the word παλιγγενεσία, Regeneration, ſaid, ſurely it was not

good Greek, for he had never read the word in any Author; ſo great a ſtranger was he, not only to the work, but to the notion of regeneration: Yet others there are, that attain clear notions about the principal heads, and truths therein; but withall, remain ſtrangers to the practice and power thereof; they have a ſpeculative, but not an operative; a common, but not an experimental knowdge; they have heads full of light, but hearts void of life; they earneſtly covet knowledge, but do not realy love truth: but what doth this avail to have a notional Knowledge of God, and not to have an intereſt in him? to have general notions of Chriſt, without a particular application of him? to be able to diſcourſe of the Covenants of Promiſe, and yet to be ſtrangers to them? to have skill to open the Nature of Faith and Repentance, and to want the Poſſeſſion and Power of them? to be like a hand

ſet

ſet up in the way to point out a City of refuge to others, and not to move at all towards it themſelves? WOULD you then be a good Proficient in heavenly Studies? get your underſtanding enliven'd, as well as enlightn'd; receive Truth into your heart as well as into your head; and draw your knowledge into practice, ſo through your practice, you will increaſe your knowledge, *Joh.* 7. 17. *Pſalm* 119. *v.* 110.

## *Contemp.* II.

2. As there is a great deal of difference, between a Soul Informing of a Body, and a Spirit Aſſuming of a Body; ſo there is a great deal of difference between ſuch Profeſſors as act from an indwelling principle of life, and ſuch as act only from outward aid and aſſiſtance. The Angels that appear'd to *Abraham*, and ſo to *Lot* in Humane ſhape, could not be

call'd living men; For though in those assumed bodies, they did many things like men, they did eat, and drink, and walk, and discourse, and reason, yet it was but only from a form assisting, not from a form Informing; there was no inward principle of life; so many persons, through the common help of the Spirit, may do many actions like the Children of God, Pray, and Preach, and give Alms, and the like, and yet not living Saints, because though they have the Spirit assisting them, yet they have no inward vital principle enlivening of them. Spiritual Life, 'tis the result of the Souls Union with Christ, whereby, through the indwelling of the Spirit of Christ in the soul, such holy saving Qualities are diffus'd throughout all the faculties thereof, as that thereby they are inabled for, inclined to, and exercis'd in, spiritual operations. THEREFORE if thou would'st judge

judge of Spiritual Life, conſider not only what thou do'ſt, but the Principle from whence thou do'ſt it.

*Contemp.* III.

3. Conſideration, is the firſt ſtep towards reformation: when perſons run from God, they likewiſe run from themſelves; they care not to conſider what they are doing, or whither they are going. If we would return to God, we muſt retire into our ſelves: the Prodigal comes to himſelf, before he goeth to his Father, *How many hired Servants* (ſaith he) *of my Fathers have Bread enough, and to ſpare, and I periſh with hunger?* *Luk.* 15. 17. he conſiders there may be relief in going, there was nothing but ruin in ſtaying; and ſo conſideration begets reſolution, reſolution returning, and returning meets with a gracious reception. Who would undo himſelf for want of conſidering what he is

doing? eſpecially who would ſhut his eyes, that ſo he may not ſee his deſtruction before he feels it? It is ſaid, *Luk.* 14. 31, 32. *What King going to make War againſt another King, ſitteth not down firſt, and conſulteth, whether he be able with ten thouſand, to meet him that commeth againſt him with twenty thouſand? Or elſe, while the other is yet a great way off, he ſendeth an Embaſſage, and deſireth conditions of peace.* Man naturally is an enemy to God, and in actual War againſt him. But hear what God ſaith, *Ezek.* 22. 14. *Can thine heart endure, or can thine hands be ſtrong in the daies that I ſhall deal with thee?* If not, why wilt thou then oppoſe him? thou canſt not withſtand: and in *Iſa.* 27. 4. *Fury is not in me, who would ſet the Briers and Thorns againſt me in battel? I would go through them, or march againſt them, I would burn them together;* and verſe the 5th. *Or let him take hold*

*of*

*of my ſtrength, that he may make peace with me, and he ſhall make peace with me.* The King of Kings, and Lord of Hoſts, ſends to poor witherd Thorns and Briers, to invite them to a peace, and holds forth to them that ſtrength which is an Almighty ſtrength, to take hold upon. THEREFORE ſit down and conſider what thou do'ſt, or rather riſe up and lay hold of this ſtrength, and make thy peace with God, and thou ſhalt make peace; otherwiſe that ſtrength which is mighty to ſave if thou accept of it, will be as mighty to deſtroy if thou oppoſe it.

## *Contemp.* IIII.

4. It is too frequent for many perſons when under convictions, to ſhift out of them, either by unſeaſonable diverſions, or deceitful Reſolutions. The Woman of *Samaria* when charg'd by our Saviour with her ſin

turns aside from it by asking a question about the true place of Worship, *Joh.* 4. 16, 20. So many, instead of falling under the power of Religion, fall to disputing about Religion. Others instead of turning into their hearts turn aside to the World. I have heard of one that not long since acknowledged upon his death bed, that he had had many convictions, and being asked how he satisfi'd himself under them, or what he did to put them off, answer'd, he filled his hands with business from the one end of the week to the other, that so he might not think of them. But have a care of stifeling convictions, or checking the voice of Conscience. If convictions further not thy humiliation, they will aggravate thy Condemnation. And if conscience be not heard here as thy Monitor, it will be heard elsewhere as thy Tormentor. Again, there be others that shift from under them by deceitful Resolutions, when they

they ſee their ſins, and a neceſſity of changing their lives, labour to quiet their Conſcience with Reſolutions to ſet upon the work hereafter, not conſidering, that God may deny them their time, who deny God his time; And they who in a ſinfull way ſtrive againſt his Spirit, may in a judicial way be deny'd the Spirit to ſtrive any longer with them. THEREFORE ſpeedily ſet upon the work, for if hereafter thou reſolveſt to repent, why not now? leſt if not now, thou may'ſt be deny'd Grace to repent hereafter.

*Contemp.* V.

5. There be ſome, that when they are invited to come to Chriſt, tell you they have no power to come; whereas indeed they have no will to come: He that was invited to the Marriage-

-aſt, *Luke* 14. 20. gave this for his anſwer, *I cannot come*; whereas if you look into his reaſon, it was, be-

cauſe

cauſe he would not come. You that being invited ſay what would you have me to do? I have no power; why do only what's in your power: Its in your power to wait at wiſdomes gates, at the Poſts of her Doors, as well as to attend at any other place for your outward advantage. Its in your power (you that may enjoy the means) to hear the word carefully and diligently, as well as to be induſtrious in your worldly affaires. It's in your power to meditate on what you hear, and frequently to retire into your ſelves, and conſider your ſtate; as it is to withdraw your ſelves to caſt up your accounts. It's as much in your power to petition God to give you a penitential heart, as 'tis in your power to ſolicite man for what you want. Therefore uſe the means, lie at the Pool, thou know'ſt not how ſoon Chriſt may come and heal thee: Meditate much upon a Crucify'd Chriſt, a Chriſt as lifted up; thou know'ſt not how

how ſoon an attractive power may come forth from him for to draw thee. Be in the way with *Zacheus*, Who knows but whilſt thou art waiting for Chriſt, Chriſt may ſay unto thee as he did unto him, *this day Salvation is come to thy Houſe*? Till this be done, do not ſay thou canſt not come, but thou wilt not come. And yet though thou ſhould'ſt find thy ſelf to have no heart to come, Come that thou may'ſt have a heart, and come upon the incouragement of that bleſſed word that Wiſdom ſpeaks, *Prov.* 9. 4. *Whoſo is ſimple, let him turn in hither. As for him that wanteth underſtanding,* חסר-לב corde carenti, *to him that wanteth a heart ſhe ſaith, Come eat my Bread, and drink of the Wine which I have mingled.*

## *Contemp.* VI.

6. There be many that wreſt the Scriptures to their own deſtruction,

and amongſt many, this Scripture hath been wofully wreſted by many, *Rom.* 10. 13. *Whoſoever ſhall call upon the Name of the Lord ſhall be ſaved:* How many a poor creature hath preſum'd from hence to expect ſalvation upon a bare vocal crying out, Lord have mercy upon me, and ſo have periſh'd for ever. That thou may'ſt not ſtrike againſt this rock, give me leave to hang out ſome light. Firſt take notice, one Scripture muſt be explain'd by another, as in 1 *Epiſt. John* 1. 9. 'tis there ſaid, *If we confeſs our ſins, he is faithful and juſt to forgive us our ſins:* A Scripture ſtumbled at by many, as if a bare confeſſion was enough, whereas in *Prov.* 28. 13. 'Tis more fully explain'd, *If we confeſs and forſake our ſins,* So this place whoſoever ſhall call upon the Name of the Lord ſhall be ſaved: in another place you have this qualification expreſſed, whoſoever ſhall call upon him in truth, *Pſal.* 145. 18.

Secondly,

Secondly, conſider as all graces are knit together, ſo all duties; and therefore life and ſalvation is annexed, ſometimes to one duty, ſometimes to another; ſometimes to ſeeking of God *Lament.* 3. 25. Sometimes unto hearing, *Prov.* 8. 34. *Iſa.* 35. 3. and hereunto, calling upon God: ſo that where one duty is expreſs'd to which bleſſedneſs is annex'd, every duty is imply'd. Thirdly, The Text muſt be underſtood by the Scope of the place, which is to prove that ſalvation is not by the righteouſneſs that is of the Law, but the righteouſneſs which is of faith: It's not a righteouſneſs that is obtain'd by doing that muſt juſtify, but by believing, *v.* 11. For the Scripture ſaith whoſoever believeth ſhall be ſaved, whether he be *Jew* or *Gentile.* And that which he calls believing in the *v.* 11. in the 12. and 13. *verſes,* is expreſſed by calling on the Name of the Lord; for there is no right calling upon the name of the Lord unto ſalva-

ſalvation without Faith, as it follows, *How ſhall they call upon him, on whom they have not believed?* WOUDST thou then call upon the name of the Lord ſavingly? Firſt call upon him ſincerely, ſubjecting to his command; Secondly, Call upon him believingly, ſubmitting to his Righteouſneſs.

## *Contemp.* VII.

7. Many upon hearing ſuch a Doctrine as this, that deſire of grace, is grace, are apt to conclude that they have grace, becauſe they have deſires; but 'tis to be fear'd, that the deſire of many is like the deſire of the ſluggard, of whom 'tis ſaid, *The deſire of the ſlothful killeth him: for his hands refuse to labour*, *Prov.* 21. 25. They content themſelves with deſires, but put not forth endeavours; they think their hearts right, though their hands be idle, and this ſlays them; *for as the ſoul of the ſluggard deſireth and hath nothing*

*nothing*, *Prov.* 13. 4. So it is a ſign there is no grace, where there is nothing but bare deſires. True deſires of grace, are knowing deſires they ariſe from the Knowledge of the worth, and need of Grace: They are reſtleſs deſires, they cannot be ſatisfied with the want of grace: They are extenſive deſires, it is not ſmall meaſures, and degrees will ſerve the turn. They are laborious deſires, taking pains and uſing means for the obtaining of grace. 'Tis ſaid, *Prov.* 18. 1. *Through deſire a man having ſeparated himſelf, ſeeketh and intermedleth with all wiſdome.* A man that hath a deſire after wiſdom, ſeparates himſelf from what may let, or hinder him therein, and intermedleth with all wiſdom; or, as in the margent, and intermēdleth in every buſineſs, applies himſelf to all the means for the procuring therof. THERFORE take heed that you neither periſh for want of deſires after grace, or miſcarry, for want of joyning endevours with your deſires.

*Contem-*

## *Contemp.* VIII.

8. Many make that an objection to keep them off from Chriſt, which ſhould be a motive to haſten their going to him. They ſay they are ſinners, great ſinners, and therefore dare not go. This is as if a patient ſhould ſay, I am ſick, very ſick, and therefore dare not make uſe of the Phyſician, whereas the whole need not the Phyſician, but thoſe that are ſick. Art thou Ungodly, and Rebellious? *Conſider Chriſt died for the ungodly, Rom.* 5. 6. *and received gifts for men, yea for the rebellious alſo, that the Lord God might dwell among them, Pſ.*68. 18. Art thou an infamous, and ſcandalous ſinner? Such were the *Publicans*, and *Harlots* that found mercy; ſuch was *Manaſſeh*, one that by Idolatry, Enchantments, Witchcraft, and ſhedding innocent blood, wrought much wickedneſs in the ſight of the Lord; Yet when he humbled

humbled himſelf, and prayed to the Lord, the Lord was intreated of him, and heard his ſupplication, 2 *Chron.* 33. 12, 13. Such likewiſe were ſome of the *Corinthians*, before converſion 1 *Cor.* 6. 9. &c. *Be not deceived, neither Fornicators, nor Idolaters, nor Adulterers, nor Effeminate, nor Abuſers of themſelves with mankind, nor Thieves nor Covetous, nor Drunkards, nor Revilers nor Extortioners ſhall inherit the Kingdom of God. AND SUCH WERE SOME OF YOU, but ye are waſhed, but ye are ſanctified, but ye are juſtified in the Name of the Lord Jeſus, and by the Spirit of our God.* Haſt thou not only neglected, but rejected; not only rejected, but deſpiſed; not only turned thy back upon, but opened thy mouth againſt the waies of God? yet ſee how wiſdom invites ſcorners to accept of grace, *Prov.* 1. 22, 23. Haſt thou nothing but ſin, and unrighteouſneſs, and yet haſt ſtubbornly gon on, and ſtouted it out againſt God, not fearing his threat-

threatnings, nor regarding his judgments? yet hear what the Lord ſaith in *Iſa.* 46. 12. *Hearken unto me you ſtout hearted that are far from righteouſneſs, I bring near my righteouſneſs, it ſhall not be far off; and my ſalvation ſhall not tarry* &c. Great ſinners, yea the chiefeſt of ſinners, have obtained mercy, 1 *Tim.* 1. 15. And to ſuch Chriſt upon his Reſurection ſends his Goſpel, declaring that *Repentance, and Remiſſion of ſins ſhould be Preached in his Name among all Nations, begining at Jeruſalem, Luk.* 24. 47. They were to begin to preach peace, where the Prince of peace had been lately crucified, even at *Jeruſalem*; and in *Jeruſalem* he ſends it to his betrayers and murderers; and among his murderers to thoſe that were the chief, to *Annas* the High Prieſt & *Caiaphas*, with the kindred of the High Prieſt, *Act.* 4. 6, 7. &c. And again it is preached to the High Prieſt, chief Prieſts, and the council, *Act.* 5. 29, 30, 31, 32. ther-

THERFORE ſay not thy ſins are great & therfore thou dar'ſt not go to Chriſt; for this is to add unto them the greateſt ſin of all, which is unbelief; but ſay becauſe my ſins are great, therefore the more need I have to go to Chriſt.

## *Contemp.* IX.

9. As it is the glory of a man to paſs over a tranſgreſſion, *Prov.* 19.11. So God accounts it his glory to pardon ſin. *Moſes* beſeecheth God to ſhew him his glory, *Exod.* 33.18. accordingly God deſcendeth in a Cloud, *and paſſeth by before him, and proclaimeth the Lord, the Lord God, merciful, and gracious longſuffering, and abundant in goodneſs, and truth, keeping mercy for thouſands, forgiving iniquity, and tranſgreſſion, and ſin &c. Exod.* 34. 5, 6, 7. The goodneſs, grace and pardoning mercy of God, is his glory, called *the riches of his Glory, Rom.* 9.23. *Epheſ.* 3. 16. Therefore it is a ſin, and ſhame, for a perſon

perſon to ſay that his iniquity is greater then that it may be forgiven; for what are finite ſins, to infinite mercy? We read of *the reigning of ſin unto death*, but withal of *grace reigning through righteouſneſs unto eternal life by Jeſus Chriſt* our Lord, *Rom.* 5. 21. We read of the abounding of ſin, but withal of the ſuperabounding of Grace in the 20. *v. Where ſin abounded, grace did much more abound.* The verb πλεονάζω ſignifies, as *Zanchy* obſerves, to overflow as a fountain that runs abroad plentifully, that others may partake of it; but to this is added, a præpoſition which augments the ſenſe ὑπερπλεονάζω to abound above meaſure, to overabound exceedingly. So in 1 *Tim.* 1. 14. 'Tis ſaid *the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant.* 'Tis obſerv'd that πλεονάζω, ſignifies to abound more then enough, and therefore a Pleonaſme is ſuch a figure in Rhetorick, where ſome ſuperfluous word is added in a ſentence, to ſignify a thing more emphatically,

as

as I ſpake the word with my own mouth; but beſides unto this is added alſo a prepoſition to increaſe the ſenſe ὑπερεπλεόνασε, the grace of God hath been exceedingly more than enough; and it muſt needs be ſo, becauſe infinite. Therefore wouldeſt thou exalt the infiniteneſs of Gods grace and the value and vertue of Chriſts blood? then ſay not with *Cain*, my iniquity is greater then that it may be forgiven, but pray with *David*, *For thy Name ſake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity for it is great*, *Pſal.* 25. 11.

## *Contemp.* X.

10. Many take that for humility, which indeed is pride, and thoſe are ſuch, who though they ſee their need of Chriſt, and would fain have Chriſt, yet becauſe they cannot bring a heart ſo humbled, and ſo broken as they deſire, they dare not come to him. To be ſenſible of our unworthineſs is good, but

but to think from our ſelves to raiſe any thing to render us worthy, is evil. This is pride, When men would bring ſomething to Chriſt, and not receive all from him; and this is true humility, for a ſoul to be nothing in it ſelf, and to come with nothing to Chriſt, according to that invitation, *come buy Wine and Milk without money and without price, Iſa.* 55.1. *THEREFORE come* empty of ſelf, to a full Chriſt.

## *Contemp.* XI

11. This is natural for poor ſinners in turning from ſin, to turn to their own works; for that which was mans firſt righteouſneſs, to that they are prone firſt to betake themſelves unto: they would do ſomething that they might live, rather then believe that they might have life. Whereas true Repentance is a turning from ſin to God in Chriſt, and not a turning from ſin to ſelf, and our own doings: this

this can neither make amends for ſins paſt, for all we can doe is but preſent duty; neither can it find acceptance for time to come, for 'tis onely in the beloved that our perſons, and ſervices are accepted. Therefore take heed either of ſtaying in ſinful ſelfe, or turning to righteous ſelfe, but make it thy work with the Apoſtle *Paul to be found in Chriſt, not having thy own righteouſneſs which is of the law, but that which is through the Faith of Chriſt, the righteouſneſs which is of God by faith, Philip.* 3. 9.

## *Contemp.* XII.

12. Some make that a cauſe to hinder their induſtry in point of going to Chriſt, which ſhould be a means to further their diligence. If we be elected ſay they we ſhall go, if we be not elected t'is in vain to go: why ſhould we deal worſe with our ſouls, then we do with our bodies? If the body be under

under ſickneſs, you do not ſay I will take no phyſick, for if it be decreed I ſhall live I do not need it, and if it be decreed I ſhall dy, it cannot help me, but you uſe the means in order to the end;ſo ſhould we do in reference to our ſouls, thoſe that God hath elected unto life, thoſe he hath choſen to go unto Chriſt that they may have life. It is not thy work at firſt to examine whether God hath choſen thee, but t'is thy work to chuſe him,make your calling and election ſure: the way to make our election ſure, is to make our calling ſure.THEREFORE do not ſay if I be not elected t'is in vain to go, but ſay through grace I will go, that ſo I may know that *I am elected.*

## *Contemp.* XIII.

13. There be ſome that divide between the mercy of God, and the Mediation of Chriſt: becauſe God is gracious, and merciful, therefore they hope

hope he will be ſo to them, whereas God is juſt, as well as merciful, and Juſtice muſt be ſatisfied, if ever mercy be exercis'd; yea Juſtice muſt be our friend, as well as mercy; if ever we be ſaved, we muſt have ſalvation from the Throne of Juſtice, as well as from the ſeat of mercy, *Rom* 3. 26. *To declare I ſay, at this time, his righteouſneſs, that he might be juſt, and the juſtifier of him which believeth in Jeſus.* God is not only gracious, but righteous in the pardoning of ſin; for Chriſt having ſatisfied Juſtice, purchas'd mercy, and open'd away for the diſpenſing of it. God comes thereby to be righteous in inſtifying a believer. THEREFORE deceive not thy ſelf, to hope for mercy without Chriſt, or Chriſt without faith. Again, there be others that divide between the death of Chriſt, and the reſurrection of Chriſt; between the benefit of the one, and the power of the other; between what

Chriſt hath wrought for ſinners, and what Chriſt works in ſinners: but take heed of this; for if Chriſt hath wrought out ſalvation for thee, he will work out ſalvation in thee: he that died to ſin, and liveth unto God, will alſo make *thee dead unto* ſin, and alive unto God, *Rom.* 6.10, 11.

## *Contemp.* XIIII.

14. In going to Chriſt, we ſhould make uſe of the promiſes; and whereas 'tis aſſerted, that there is no right to a promiſe till union with Chriſt, as a man hath no right to the land of an Heireſs, till he hath a marriage-intereſt in her perſon, and thereupon it may be queried, what uſe may thoſe make of promiſes, that have not yet an intereſt in Chriſt? for anſwer to this, we muſt diſtinguiſh between the invitation of the promiſe, and the good of the promiſe as for inſtance, *John* 3. 16. *Whoſoever believeth in him*

*him ſhall not periſh, but have everlaſting life.* Here is the invitation of the promiſe, and this is to all *whoſoever believeth*; and then there is the good of the promiſe, which is *everlaſting life*, and this is onely to thoſe *that believe.* All have a right to the promiſe, *ratione medii*, as a means to lead to Chriſt, though not *ratione juris*, not a right to the good promiſed till they believe. THERFORE let the invitation of the promiſe which is to all, draw thee; let the warrant of the promiſe which is *that thoſe that believe, ſhall not periſh, but have* everlaſting life, encourage thee to lay hold upon Chriſt, who is the good of the promiſe; *for he that hath the ſon hath life,* 1 *John* 5. 12.

## *Contemp.* XV.

15. The right way of improving promiſes, is by faith, to apply thy ſoul through them to Chtiſt, and Chriſt in them to thy ſoul; for all the promiſes

lead unto, and center in Chriſt, who is the great promiſe; he is the ſum and ſubſtance of all promiſes; as all the promiſes are ſum'd up in the Covenant of grace, ſo the whole Covenant of grace, is ſum'd up in Chriſt, who is called *the Covenant*, *Iſa.* 42. 6. Would'ſt thou then partake of all the good of the Covenant, then take hold on Chriſt who was given for a Covenant.

*Contemp.* XVI.

16. We muſt diſtinguiſh between receiving comfort from the promiſes, and receiving Chriſt in the promiſes: the Goſpel preſents good things, and the natural credulity of man may work towards the belief of them, as it doth towards the belief of other things; and from a miſtaken apprehenſion of our intereſt in them, we may receive comfort from them, when we have not received Chriſt in them. The ſtony ground received the word with

with joy, but fell away, becauſe they had no root in themſelves, *Matth.* 13. THEREFORE take heed of receiving comfort, where you receive not Chriſt.

## *Contemp.* 17.

17. Some aſſent to the way of ſalvation in their Underſtanding, but conſent not unto it with their Will. They are for Chriſt in their Judgment, but for other things in their Affections: So that it is but part of their ſoul that is for Chriſt. Again, ſome would have the benefits that come by Chriſt, but they are not for the perſon of Chriſt; or if for his perſon, it is as a Saviour, not as a Lord; as a Prieſt to offer a Sacrifice for them, not as a Prophet to inſtruct them, or as a King to rule over them: So that 'tis but part of Chriſt that they are for. But this is equally dangerous; for if we would be ſaved,

we muſt cleave to Chriſt with all the faculties of our ſoul, our Will, Judgment, Affections, &c. and we muſt cleave to all of Chriſt; Chriſt in his Natures, Perſon, Offices, &c. THEREFORE if you would rightly cloſe with Chriſt; ſee that your whole ſoul, cloſe with a whole Chriſt.

## *Contemp.* XVIII.

18. We read in the 21 of *Numbers*, that when the children of *Iſrael* murmured againſt God and *Moſes*, that he ſent fiery Serpents among them, by the biting whereof much people died; and that upon the acknowledgment of their ſin, and the prayer of *Moſes* for them, God commanded a fiery Serpent to be made, and ſet upon a pole with a promiſe, that every one that was bitten and looked upon it, ſhould live. This was a Type of Chriſt, which himſelf explains, *John* 3.14,15. By looking unto

to whom we ſhall be ſaved. And between this legal Type and Goſpel Antitype there is a ſimilitude in divers reſpects.

Firſt, As every one that was ſtung without exceptions, poor, as well as rich, mean as well as great, might look to the brazen Serpent and be healed: ſo, whoſoever, without exception, believeth in the name of the Lord Jeſus, ſhall not periſh, but have everlaſting life.

Secondly, Thoſe that were moſt bitten by looking to the brazen Serpent were as eaſily, and as fully healed, as thoſe that were leaſt bitten: ſo the greateſt ſinners by looking unto Jeſus Chriſt, are as readily and compleatly ſaved as thoſe that are the leaſt ſinners.

Thirdly, As Chriſt was lifted up in the Type for thoſe that murmured againſt him, for they are ſaid to tempt Chriſt, 1 *Cor* 10. 9. So he was lifted up upon the croſs for thoſe that were

enemies to him, yea thoſe that were his betrayers and murderers, that even ſuch by looking on him might be ſaved by him.

Fourthly, As thoſe did juſtly periſh that would not look to the Serpent, but either looked upon their ſores as too great to be healed, or on the contrary, that looked upon themſelves as not bitten enough, and therefore had no need of healing, or elſe turned aſide to other means for healing. So thoſe ſinners juſtly periſh that will not come to Chriſt, either becauſe they think their ſins too great to be pardoned, or elſe ſee not their need of pardon, or think that other means will do without Chriſt.

Fifthly, As thoſe that looked upon the Serpent with a dim eye, were as perfectly healed, as thoſe that looked upon the Serpent with a ſtrong clear eye. So thoſe that look upon Chriſt, though with a weak Faith, are as compleatly juſtified, as thoſe that

that look upon him with a ſtrong Faith.

Sixthly, As the eye which beheld the brazen Serpent, beheld other things, but cured only as it beheld the brazen Serpent; ſo the ſame juſtifying Faith believeth all the truths that God hath reveal'd; but as juſtifying, ſo it looketh unto Chriſt.

Seventhly, Though the promiſe of healing was a warrant for thoſe who were ſtung, to do what they did, yet it was not the bare word, or promiſe, but their looking upon the brazen Serpent that healed. So the promiſes of ſalvation by Chriſt, are our warrant to go to him; but it is reſting upon Chriſt in them, by which we muſt be ſaved. The object of Faith (as one obſerves) is not an Evangelical Maxim, or Propoſition, but the Perſon of Chriſt.

Eighthly, It was a brazen Serpent lifted up upon a pole, which thoſe that were ſtung by the fiery Serpent

were to look upon. So it is Chriſt as lifted up upon the Croſs, and dying for ſinners, which juſtifying Faith looks at. Though whole Chriſt be the object of juſtifying Faith, yet as juſtifying, it hath a principal reſpect to a crucified Chriſt, as that which is ſuitable to the condition of a diſtreſſed ſinner. THEREFORE are you under the call of this grace; *Look unto me and be ye ſaved all the ends of the Earth, Iſa.* 45. 22. & 65. 1. Beg to be under the efficacy of this Call, that he that hath been lifted up would draw you to him, *Joh.* 12. *v.* 32. That ſo ſeeing the Son, you may believe on him, and have everlaſting life by him, *Joh.* 6. 40.

## *Contemp.* 19.

19. True Faith is call'd a receiving of Chriſt, *Joh.* 1. 12. *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the Sons of God, even*

*to*

*to them that believe on his name.* True receiving of Chriſt implieth,

Firſt, That we ſee our ſelves naturally deſtitute of him, we receive him, becauſe we are without him.

Secondly, It implieth we have an offer made of him; we could not receive him, were he not offer'd. God offers Chriſt in a word of grace, as in ſuch a word as that, *John* 3. 16. which the ſoul hath a ſight of.

Thirdly, Receiving implies a ſight of our need of Chriſt. If a thing be offer'd, and we have no need of it, we care not for the receiving of it. Chriſt is ſo tend'red, as that there is ſomething in the tender uſually added, to convince us of our need of him. *Go preach the Goſpel, he that believeth, and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved; and he that believeth not, ſhall be damned, Mark* 16. 16. How can this latter clauſe be termed the Goſpel? why as it ſhews the need a poor ſoul hath of Chriſt, that ſo he may haſten to him.

Fourthly, A receiving of Chri implieth a laying aſide all for Chri We do not receive with a full hand; we lay aſide what is in our hand, that ſo we may receive what is offer'd; ſo the ſoul that receiveth Chriſt, layeth aſide all for Chriſt; he emptieth his hand of ſin, of the world, of ſelf-righteouſneſs, &c. to receive Chriſt.

Fifthly, A receiving of Chriſt implieth, a receiving of him upon the terms offer'd: The Donor hath his terms, which the Receiver muſt obſerve. So the ſoul receiveth Chriſt, as tender'd by God; Chriſt, and Chriſt alone, a whole Chriſt, and the whole that comes by Chriſt: Chriſt with poverty, as well as Chriſt with riches: Chriſt with reproach, as well as Chriſt with good report: Chriſt with the Croſs, as well as Chriſt with the Crown.

Sixthly, Receiving implieth, an actual laying hold on what is tendred:

dred: So the ſoul actually cloſeth with Chriſt, in its receiving of him. WOULD'ST thou then rightly judge concerning Faith? why thou may'ſt know how 'tis with thee, in point of believing, from what hath been done by thee, in point of receiving.

## *Contemp.* XX.

20. The ſoul that truly receives Chriſt, is continually receiving of him, reception is not a tranſient, but a continued act. That ſoul which hath received Chriſt, and reſteth upon him as the foundation ſtone, is continually coming to him, as to a living ſtone, 1 *Peter* 2.4. As Chriſt is receiving the ſoul neerer, and neerer to himſelf, ſo the ſoul receiveth Chriſt; for our receiving Chriſt, is but an impreſſion made upon our hearts, from Chriſts receiving us. Beſides the firſt reception made of believers, we read

read of the Lords further receiving of them, 2 *Cor.*6.17. He receiveth them to fuller manifeſtation, and participation of his love, and they receive him in fuller communications, and emanations of his grace. THEREFORE as Chriſt apprehends the ſoul, ſo the ſoul ſhould apprehend Chriſt, that ſo it may apprehend that, for which it is apprehended of Chriſt Jeſus.

## *Coutemp.* XXI.

21. As the ſoul hath received Chriſt, ſo it ſhould walk in him, you have expreſs command for it, *Coloſ.* 2. 6. *As you have therefore received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, ſo walk you in him.* We read of firſt Love, and firſt works, *Rev.*2. 4, 5. We ſhould look to this continually, that our love be as ſtrong to Chriſt, our deſires as large after Chriſt, our eſteem as much of Chriſt, our delight as great in Chriſt, our works as full for Chriſt, as

in the day of our eſpouſal to Chriſt. That we have as deep a ſenſe of ſin, as true a value for Chriſt, as free a chuſing of him, as firm a cleaving to him, as lively actings towards him, as we had when we firſt imbraced him: this is to walk in Chriſt, as we have received Chriſt. It was the failing of the *Epheſians*, that they fell from their *firſt Love*, and their *firſt works*. It was the commendations of *Jehoſaphat*, *that he walked in the firſt ways of his Father David*, 2 *Chro.* 17. 3. And it was the glory of the Church of *Thiatyra*, and ſo will be of all thoſe that follow them, *that their laſt works were more then their firſt*, *Revel.* 2. 19.

## *Contemp.* XXII.

22. Juſtification by the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, imputed of God, and laid hold on by faith, without works, is a great truth frequently aſſerted

in

in the Scripture, 1 *Cor.* 1. 30. *Rom.* 3. 21, &c. That we are juſtified, without works, appears from the oppoſition that is put between faith by which we are juſtified, and works, *Gal.* 2. 16. Secondly, The inconſiſtency that is between grace, through which we are juſtified, and works, *Rom.* 4. 4. & 11. 6. Thirdly, From the deſign of God, which is to take away all boaſting from the creature, *Rom.* 3. 27. And to exalt his own grace, *Eph.* 2. 8, 9. In the next place we are juſtified not only without works done in compliance with the ceremonial law, but likewiſe without works done in obedience to the moral law; and that appears from the Apoſtles excluding that law, in this caſe which was to abide, *Rom.* 3. 31. Beſides all our righteouſneſs being imperfect, makes us lyable to the curſe of the law, of which inſtance is given in the moral law, compare, *Gal.* 3. 10. with *Deut.* 27. 15, 16, &c.

And

And not only moral works are excluded in point of juſtification which were done before converſion, by the power of nature, but thoſe that aredone after converſion, through the aſſiſtance of the ſpirit; for this the Apoſtle aſſerts againſt the *Galatians* who were converted, and had received the Spirit through the hearing of faith; neither are we juſtified by works in conjunction with the righteouſneſs of Chriſt; for either the righteouſneſs and merrit of Chriſt is perfect, or not, if perfect, as indeed it is *Heb.* 10. 14. *ch.* 5. 9. *Coloſ.* 2. 10. Then there is no need of our righteouſneſs, if not then our imperfect righteouſneſs cannot make it compleat. Thoſe that went about to ſeduce the *Galatians*, did own the grace of God, and the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, for they were ſuch as believed, *Acts.* 15. 5. As alſo the *Galatians* themſelves did own the ſame, or elſe what force would have been

been in that expreſſion of the Apoſtle. *I do not fruſtrate the grace of God, for if righteouſneſs come by the law, then Chriſt is dead in vain*, Gal. 2. 21. If the *Galatians* had not given Chriſt's merit and death ſome ſhare, at leaſt, in juſtification with their works, yet againſt ſuch works doth the Apoſtle argue; neither are we juſtified by faith as it is a habit, that is, as it is a holy quality infus'd into the ſoul by God, and inhering and dwelling in us, for then we ſhould be juſtified by inherent righteouſneſs, by a righteouſneſs within us, but the righteouſneſs by which we are juſtified is a righteouſneſs without us, P*hil.* 3. 9. Faith as a grace implanted in our ſoul, is part of our ſanctification, but our juſtification is diſtinct from our ſanctification, *Rom.* 5. 19. 1 *Cor.* 6. 11. The one is implanted in us, the other is imputed to us; nor are we juſtified by faith as a work, for works as well of the Goſpel as the law are excluded,

*Rom.*

*Rom.* 11. 5, 6. And the righteouſneſs by which we are juſtified, is not a work of our own, but a righteouſneſs wrought by another; nor yetby faith,as it is accepted by God for the fulfilling of the Law; and that either freely, or for the merit of Chriſt; for faith, 'tis that which is imperfect; we believe but in part, but God juſtifieth in a way of righteouſneſs, upon a valuable conſideration, *Rom.* 3.25,26. Faith bears no proportion to the righteouſneſs, of the law, but the righteouſneſs by which we are juſtified is ſuch a righteouſneſs, as bears proportion to the righteouſneſs of the Law, *Rom.* 8. 3. THEREFORE take heed leaſt by aſſerting, and mixing works, either in whole, or part, in the point of juſtification, you do not onely doctrinally, and practically declare the grace of God to be uſeleſs, and the death of Chriſt to be in vain, but eventually, and experimentally find it ſo as to your

ſelves

ſelves, *Rom.* 9. 31. *Pſal.* 69. 27.

## *Contemp.* XXIII.

23. When 'tis ſaid God juſtifieth the ungodly, it muſt be underſtood in *ſenſu diviſo*, of ſuch perſons as were ungodly, not ſuch perſons as remain ungodly. God juſtifieth the ungodly, objectively, not ſubjectively; ſuch who were ungodly untill they were juſtified, but do not remain ungodly being juſtified; for where righteouſneſs is imputed, there holineſs is implanted; and though theſe are ſeparable in point of juſtification, yet they are inſeparable in the party juſtified. The Apoſtle mindeth the *Corinthians* that they were ungodly, but now (ſaith he) *you are waſhed, you are ſanctified, you are juſtified, in the name of our Lord Jeſus, and by the ſpirit of our God*, 1 *Cor.* 6. 11. Thoſe that Chriſt juſtifieth, he ſanctifieth; they who have his righteouſneſs imputed

to

to them, have his ſpirit waſhing of them. THEREFORE although by faith we are to look out of our ſelves for the juſtifying of our perſons, yet we are to look into our ſelves for the juſtifying of our faith.

## *Contemp.* XXIV.

Thoſe Scriptures that ſeemingly diſagree, being rightly underſtood, do ſweetly harmonize. Though *Paul* aſſert *a man is juſtified by faith without the deeds of the Law*, *Rom.* 3. 28. And *James* affirms *by works a man is juſtified, and not by faith onely*, *Jam.* 2. *v.* 24. Yet there is a truth in both, being both from the ſame ſpirit of truth. *Paul* ſpeaks of faith as it juſtifieth, and ſo it juſtifieth without works. *James* ſpeaks of that faith which is juſtifying, and ſo it is not a dead faith, but a working faith, ſuch a faith as *Abraham* had, ſuch a faith as *Rahab* had, a living faith, not ſuch

a faith as the Devils have, who believe and tremble, a dead faith. *Paul* ſpeaks of faith as it juſtifieth before God; *James* ſpeaks of faith as it juſtifieth it ſelf before men, and in our own conſciences: *Paul* ſpeaks of the juſtification of our perſons, *James* of the juſtification of our faith. What is it juſtifieth our perſons before God? faith without works; what juſtifieth our faith before men? why good works; *ſhew me thy faith by thy works.* And the Apoſtle *Paul* himſelf that frequently aſſerts juſtification by faith without works, would have it *affirmed conſtantly that thoſe who have believed in God, ſhould be careful to maintain good works, Tit.* 3. 8. Not only that believers ſhould do good works, but they ſhould be exemplar therein. The word προϊστασθαι, rendred to maintain is obſerv'd to be a military word taken from ſuch as ſet themſelves in the front, and manfully march before the reſt to encourage them;

them; and they are not only to maintain them, but to be careful to maintain them. The word φρονπίζωσι, ſignifieth (as the learned obſerve) to ſtudy, to deviſe, to beat the brain; they are wiſely and carefully to ſtudy, how they may be moſt uſeful, and fruitful; and induſtriouſly and exemplarily to be forward in good works, to the quickning, ſtrengthening and encouraging of others. THEREFORE let faith and works have their due place, as they are not to be joyned in point of juſtification, ſo they are not to be ſever'd in point of converſation.

## *Contemp.* XXV.

25. As all believers are juſtified by one and the ſame righteouſneſs, ſo all believers have an equal intereſt in that righteouſneſs. The robe of Chriſt's righteouſneſs is like his garment that was without ſeam: 'tis not divided

divided part to one Saint, and part to another Saint, but the ſame to all the Saints, and the whole to every Saint; 'tis imputed to all alike, the ſame righteouſneſs, and all of that righteouſneſs, that was imputed to *Abraham*, is imputed to every believing Child of *Abraham*, *Rom.* 3.22. And that hand of faith that receiveth it, though weak, doth as really receive it as that which is ſtrong. THIS is matter of conſolation to a poor ſoul, that is labouring after the ſame degrees of grace that were in *Abraham*, *David*, *Paul*, and other ſaints, and cannot yet attain unto them; that though they, and many other Saints may excell him in holineſs, yet neither they, nor any other Saint excels him for righteouſneſs.

## *Contemp.* XXVI.

26. Many that are clear in the doctrinal part of juſtification, yet fail in

in the practical part, though they acknowledg juſtification to be not by works, but by grace, yet live as if they were to be juſtified by works; and this they do,

Firſt, When they place the chief ground of their acceptation with God rather upon what they are, or do; then upon what Chriſt is and hath done. 'Tis true as God accepteth the perſons, ſo the offerings of his people, but yet both perſons, and ſervices, are accepted, not for any worthineſs in them, but for the alone worthineſs of Chriſt.

Secondly, When they have recourſe principally to the frame of their hearts, and courſe of their lives for their peace, and comfort, and not chiefly to Chriſt. 'Tis true the bleſſed fruits of juſtification in us, and held forth by us, are matter of comfort, ſo far as they bear teſtimony to the truth of it; but the ſpring of our rejoycing ſhould be in Chriſt Jeſus.

Thirdly, When they think that according to the evenneſs or unevenneſs of their walking, they are more or leſs juſtified. 'Tis true, as to the manifeſtation of it to our ſouls ſo 'tis clouded, or *cleared*, according to the frame of our hearts, and courſe of our lives; but in it ſelf 'tis ſtill the ſame; and though we are to be humbled for uneven walkings, and to make it our endeavour to walk holily, and live fruitfully, yet withall we muſt conſider that neither the goodneſs of our works do add any thing to our juſtification, nor the defects thereof, impair it; becauſe our works are not concern'd therein, our righteouſneſs being out of our ſelves in another, whoſe righteouſneſs is perfect, and everlaſtingly the ſame. 'THEREFORE look to this (if you own juſtification to be by grace) that you neither ſet up works in the room of Chriſt, or in conjunction with him; for if it be of grace 'tis no more of works. Con-

## *Contemp.* XXVII.

27. Spiritual life though it be a hidden life, yet 'tis a real life; 'tis only thoſe deny it, that are ſtrangers to it: but that there is ſuch a life is manifeſt from the vigorous actings of it: when natural life is loweſt, under the periſhing of the outward man, there is the renewing of the inward man, 2. *Cor* 4. 16. As alſo from the eſteem the Saints have of it, being contented *to bear in their bodies the dying of Chriſt, that there may be manifeſted in their bodies the life of Chriſt*, 2 *Cor.* 4. 10. Not loving their lives unto the death that ſo they may preſerve their ſpiritual life: as alſo from that care they take to nouriſh it, by feeding upon that living Bread which came down from Heaven and giveth life unto the World. And as 'tis a real life, ſo an excellent life, a life of the nobleſt extraction, thoſe that are

partakers of it, are ſuch as are born from above, born of the ſpirit, born of God: alſo a life of the choiceſt endowments, 'tis that life which giveth light to the underſtanding, rectitude to the will, ſpirituality to the affections, regularity to the whole ſoul. A life alſo of the greateſt deſigns, being to enjoy God as its chiefeſt good, & to live unto God as its utmoſt end. In a word, 'tis a life of the higheſt perfection, being the life of God, the life of Chriſt; for the head and members live one kind of life. And as it's an excellent life, ſo a durable life, being hid with Chriſt, in God, laid up and ſecured in Chriſt, the head of all holy influence; and in God, the fountain of all ſpiritual life. THEREFORE if God hath ſet up in thy ſoul the light of Reaſon, bleſs him for it, but reſt not in it without the light of life *John* 8. 12. 'Tis a mercy thou art made alive in the world a rational creature, but herein lyeth thy

thy happineſs, *to be made alive unto God through Jeſus Chriſt Rom.* 6. *v.* 11. And though with Chriſt in the world thou maiſt be deſpiſed and rejected of men *Iſa.* 53. 3. Yet *when Chriſt who is thy life ſhall appear, thou ſhalt appear with him in Glory Colo.* 3. *v.* 4.

## *Contemp.* XXVIII.

28. A believer is ſaid to live, and yet not to live, *Gal.* 2. 20. *Nevertheleſs, I live, yet not I.* He may be ſaid to live,

Firſt, becauſe he is really made a partaker of a principle of life, *Eph.* 1. 1. *And you hath he quickened, who were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins.* And *he that hath the Son hath life,* 1 *John* 5. 12.

Secondly, Becauſe he is the ſeat, and ſubject in which this life doth reſide, and abide, *That Chriſt may dwell in your hearts by faith Eph.* 3. 17. 'Tis the heart of a believer in which Chriſt

the fountain of life doth dwell.

Thirdly Becauſe God makes uſe of the native faculties of the ſoul of a believer in living this life. The faculties of the ſoul are eſſentially the ſame after converſion as before, onely renew'd purifi'd, ſpiritualiz'd: the underſtanding comes to be quick'ned, by being ſavingly enlight'ned in the knowledge of ſpiritual things; the will comes to be inliven'd, by being ſavingly bow'd to the will of God; the affections come to be rectified by being graciouſly carried forth unto their right objects; the Conſcience comes to be regulated, by being made pure and powerful in the execution of its Office: but though they are thus refin'd, yet they are eſſentially the ſame. But then they may be ſaid not to live, becauſe it is Chriſt who liveth in them, he is the principle, ſpring, root, aud fountain of this life: 'tis he that is the Author and giver of all grace, and 'tis he that maintains that grace

grace he gives, and quickens that grace he doth maintain, and acts that grace he quickens, and perfects that grace he acts, THEREFORE seeing you are in the hands of Christ, not as senseless matter in the hands of the artist, but as a living Child in the hand of a Father; and seeing he makes use of the faculties of your souls in a way of subserviencie, for the carrying on of that which he works by way of efficiency. *work out your own salvation with fear and trembling for it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure Philip.* 2. 12, 13.

## *Contemp.* XXIX

29. What *Paul* said of himself, *Nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, Gal.* 2. 20. The same every believer may say of himself, the weak, as well as the strong, Christ liveth in me, the same Christ which

liv'd in *Paul*, liveth in him. A right improvement of this by faith, would conduce much to help on the perfection of a Saint. Thou complain'ſt corruptions are ſtrong, temptations many, grace weak, comforts low; yea thou feareſt thou haſt no grace, becauſe not ſo much as many other Saints: why ſit not down with *Hagar* weeping becauſe there is no water in the bottle, when there is enough in the Fountain, and the Fountain neer thee, even in thee; for the ſpirit of God in the ſoul *is as a well of water ſpringing up unto everlaſting life*, 4. *John.* 14. the ſame Chriſt from whom the ſtrongeſt Saint hath had all his ſtrength, the fruitfulleſt Saint all his fatneſs, the activeſt Saint all his livelineſs, the ſucceſsfulleſt Saint all his victories, the ſame Chriſt liveth in thee. THEREFORE let thy ſoul live more in Chriſt, that ſo thou maiſt experience Chriſt's living more in thy ſoul.

Con-

## *Contemp.* XXX.

As union with God is the fundamental ground of Communion ſo conformity to God is the actual ground of fellowſhip *if we walk in the light as he is in the light we have fellowſhip one with another*, 1. *John.* 1. 7. that is God with us, and we with God, as in the third *ver* This fellowſhip though a great myſtery, yet in Scripture is clearly prov'd, and by the experience of the Saints fully confirm'd: we read of God's drawing nigh unto the ſoul, and the ſouls drawing nigh to God, *James* 4. *v.* 8. Of God's walking with the Saints, and the Saints walking with God, 2. *Cor*, 6. 16. *Gen* 5. 22. Of Gods ſpeaking to the ſoul, and the ſoul's ſpeaking to God, *Pſal.* 27. 8. Of Chriſts ſupping with his, and of their ſupping with him, *Rev.* 3. 20. There is a ſweet intercourſe, and

loving converſe, between Chriſt and the ſoul, wherein Chriſt communicates his mind, love, and quick'ning influence to the ſoul, and the ſoul makes returns in vigorous acts of grace, warm affections, and lively duties unto Chriſt. 'Tis true, this the men of the world look upon as a dream, but 'tis no wonder to hear them deny that which they never did enjoy, neither indeed can they, for as in the light of God we muſt ſee light, ſo in the life of God we muſt live this life. There can be no communion, where there is not the ſame life. Meer ſenſual creatures, cannot have fellowſhip with rational: *Nebuchadnezzar* when he loſt his reaſon, loſt his fellowſhip with men, and was driven forth among the Beaſts. No more can meer rational creatures, have communion with God, and Chriſt, without they be made partakers of ſpiritual life. There muſt be conformity and agreement, where there is

fellow-

fellowſhip and converſe. THERE FORE hath God made thee partaker of this ſpiritual priviledg, live in the admiration of diſtinguiſhing grace, and ſay how is it, Lord, thou haſt manifeſted thy ſelf unto me and not unto the World? *John* 14. 22.

## *Contemp.* XXXI.

31. As ſin is the greateſt evil, ſo ſorrow for ſin is to be the greateſt ſorrow. Though baldneſs was forbidden the people of God in ſorrowing for the dead, *Deu.* 21. 5. Yet 'tis commanded (or that which is equivolent) in mourning for ſin *Isai.* 22. 12. And though many times the people of God may find a greater fluſh of ſorrow for outward loſſes, then they do for ſin, becauſe nature helps to mourn for the one, but hinders in the other, and natural evils are neereſt to us, and therefore moſt affect the ſenſes, yet godly ſorrow in a Saint is the greateſt ſorrow, being that which, First,

First, floweth from faith, whereby we come to ſee ſin as the greateſt evil, an inſtance of the greatneſs of the evil thereof, in a crucified Chriſt, *Zach.* 12. 10.

Secondly, Godly ſorrow is greater if you conſider the principle from whence it floweth: worldly ſorrow is like a land flood that hath no fountain to feed it, but Godly ſorrow is a ſtream that is fed by a living ſpring. As every act of Faith, ariſeth from a principle of Faith, and every act of Love, from a principle of Love; ſo every act of Mourning, from a principle of Mourning; to wit the grace of godly ſorrow, which grace is likewiſe preſerv'd in the ſoul by the ſpirit. And therefore.

Thirdly, Godly ſorrow is greater, becauſe what it wants at preſent, it makes up in continuance; worldly mourning is a dying mourning, but godly mourning is an increaſing mourning. If you would THEN

judge

judge of the truneſs of Godly ſorrow, judge of it by the greatneſs thereof; and if you would judge of the greatneſs thereof, judge of it not by what it is in the ſenſitive faculty, but by what it is in the rational; not how your outward man, but how your inward man ſtands affected; not by what it is in appearance, but by what it is in its principle and continuance.

## *Contemp.* XXXII.

32. Repentance is to be a continued work. So long as we have ſin to repent of, ſo long we muſt be repenting of ſin; and the work of repentance by after acts comes to be more diſtinctly, methodically, and evangelically carried on then at firſt. A Child of God from a continued experimental ſenſe of the indwelling and working of ſin, comes to be convinced more throughly of the root, nature, evil and aggravation of ſin, and

and to feel the weight, load & preſſure of it, more burdenſome then he did; thus *David* in the 51. *Pſal. Paul* in the 7. *Rom.* Again, his ſorrow for ſin comes to be more evangelical than formerly, for whereas before there was much ſelf love, fear of wrath and hell in his mourning; now having a clear view of the love of God in pardoning him; and being paciſi'd towards him, and the diſtinguiſhing grace and favour of God extended to him, he comes to mourn, loath and abaſe himſelf more deeply then before, and kindly to melt before the Lord, that he ſhould carry it ſo unworthily, and unthankfully towards ſo gracious, tender and loving a Father, 16. *Ezek.* 63. Again by after acts his hatred of ſin comes to be more refin'd: he hates it upon the account of its defiling nature, as well as its damning nature; for the evil that is in it, as well as for the evil that comes by it; not only becauſe 'tis

'tis ruinous, but becauſe 'tis unrighteous. In turning from ſin, as he turns from all ſin, ſo he turns from them as that which grieves the ſpirit, as well as that which breaks his peace; as that which hinders his communion, as well as that which ſpoils his comfort. And he turns not only from ſin, but more and more from his own righteouſneſs: he is undone not only with reſpect to ſinful ſelf but righteous ſelf *Iſai.* 6. 5. Again by repeated acts, he comes to be more ſpiritual in his turning to God; he turns more and more to him as in Chriſt, and he turns to him from a ſight of his excellencie, as well as from a ſenſe of his own neceſſity, he turns to God as the moſt high, *Hoſ.* 2. 16. Not only the moſt high in himſelf, but the higheſt in his eſteem; he turns to him not onely out of want, but out of choice, as the deſire, delight and center of his ſoul, and therefore turns unto him with the whole ſoul; whom have I in Heaven

Heaven but thee? and there is none upon Earth that I desire besides thee: *Ps.* 73. 25. WOULD you then improve your repentance, as to the regulation, and manifestation thereof? then according to Gospel light and love, be often in the renew'd acts thereof. Let that be frequently done, which is the better for being done frequently.

## *Contemp.* XXXIII.

33. As in mourning for sin, we are to consider it in the spring and fountain of it, and mourn over it there, thus did *David* in the 51. *Psal.* 5. so in mortifying sin, we are to consider it in the root and habit of it, and strike at it there: for as this declares we hate sin as sin, not only open sins, but secret sins, not only this and the other sin, but every sin; not only the acts and deeds of sin, but the love and liking of sin; so this is the ready way

way to get victory over them; for if the cauſe be taken away the effect will ceaſe; If you kill ſin in the principle you will deſtroy it in the practice. THEREFORE if youwould cut down the branches of ſin, cut up the root of ſin; if you would be the death of every ſin, labour to deſtroy the whole bodie of death.

## *Contemp.* XXXIV.

34. As the way to put off the deeds of ſin, is to put off the bodie of ſin, 'tis ſaid of the *Coloſſians* that they had put off the old man with his deeds *Coloſ.* 3. 9. firſt the old man, then his deeds; ſo the way to put off the body of ſin, or the old man, is by putting on the new man; for ſo it followes, and have put on the New man *ver.* 10. The old man is that inbred corruption and indwelling ſin of our old nature, the New man is the whole body of gracious habits and

and ſaving qualities, whereby we are made new: now theſe are not only in the ſame ſubject the regenerate man, but in the ſame faculties of the ſame ſubject, and have a tendency the one to expell the other, as light hath to expell darkneſs. THEREFORE would you put off the old man daily? be putting on the new man continually: be growing and increaſing in grace, if you would be weakning and waſting of ſin.

## *Contemp.* XXXV.

35. It is one thing to be crucified to ſin, and another thing to be crucified with Chriſt. The Phariſee in the 18. *Luke* 11. Stood and prayed, *God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjuſt, adulterers, or even as this publican,* and yet but a phariſee: the fooliſh Virgins had eſcaped much of the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of Chriſt

Chriſt, and yet but fooliſh *Mat.* 25. *v.* 2. *Pet.* 2. 20. To be crucified with Chriſt, is from union with him, to have communion in the merit, vertue, and efficacy of his death. THEREFORE would you die to ſin, from Chriſts dying for ſin? then look to this, that firſt by faith you be found in him, and then by faith that you improve your fellowſhip in his ſufferings, that ſo you may be made conformable to his death, 3. *Philip.* 10.

## *Contemp.* XXXVI.

36. As a Chriſtian is made alive through faith, ſo he is to live by faith, for as it is that life which brings moſt glory to God, in that it lay'th the creature low in the ſenſe of its indigencie, and highly exalts God from a ſight of his alſufficiency, ſo it is that life which is moſt accommodated to our preſent ſtate, a Chriſtian

ſtian hath many of his mercies in hope, and not in hand, in promiſe, and not in poſſeſſion, and therefore had need to live in the exerciſe of faith, which gives a being to abſent mercies, as if they were preſent. In the, 11. *Heb.* 1, You have a deſcription of faith as 'tis that grace by which we live, call'd the ὑπόστασις *of things hoped for*, It gives a ſubſtantiality, and preſent ſubſiſtencie to things that are only yet in the promiſe, as if they had an actual being; and 'tis the ἔλεγχος a clear demonſtration, and full conviction, of the realitie of things not ſeen. The faith of *Abraham* did ſo realize the day of Chriſt, that he rejoyced at it, as if he had lived in it *John* 8. 56. And as our mercies lie out of our hand in the promiſe, ſo our life and grace is laid up in another, even in Chriſt. *Adam* had all his ſtock at once put into his hands with ſtrength and power to uſe it, but like the Prodigal, he

he waſted all, and brought himſelf, with his, to Penury and Beggary; God hath therefore laid up our life in Chriſt, *God hath given us life and this life is in his Son*, 1. *John* 5. 11. Our ſtock is in his hands, that ſo it may be ſure, and Chriſt in giving of it forth, gives it forth by degrees, together with that ſtrength and ability we have to uſe it, that ſo it may be ſecur'd. LET us therefore live alwaies the life of faith, as being that excellent life which is moſt ſuitable to our ſtate, that ſo by the arms of faith we may be continually embracing the good things promiſ'd to us, and by the hand of faith daily receiving of the good things laid up for us.

## *Contemp.* XXXVII

37. To live by faith, is for the ſoul in the exerciſe thereof through a promiſe to be continually going unto, depending upon, and fetching in

in from God and Chriſt, ſupplies both with reſpect to ſpirituals and temporals, according as our neceſſities require, with aſſiſtance for a right improvement thereof. The faith by which we live this life, is that faith by which we are juſtified. *The juſt ſhall live by his faith, Hab.* 2.4. By the ſame faith with which he is juſtified, by the ſame faith he lives. It is not only ſpoken that he lives, becauſe he is made partaker of eternal life in his juſtification, but he lives, becauſe he depends upon God for all mercies, as in this place you have an inſtance in outward deliverance. Only faith muſt be here conſider'd in the different acts of it, and that upon its object under ſeveral conſiderations. Faith as it juſtifies, ſo it reſpects Chriſt and his death, Chriſt and his righteouſneſs, and accordingly cloſeth with him; faith as 'tis that grace by which we live, ſo it reſpects Chriſt and his fulneſs, Chriſt and his faithfulneſs

fulneſs, Chriſt and his alſufficiency; and accordingly applies it ſelf unto him. THEREFORE in living this life of faith upon Chriſt there are theſe three things neceſſary.

Firſt, to be well ſtor'd with promiſes, to warrant our going to him for the particular we want.

Secondly, to have clear notions of him with reſpect to that act of faith we put forth upon him.

Thirdly, To lay hold on ſuch ſuitable attributes aſcribed unto him, as may ſtrengthen our faith in what we go about; 1. *Theſ.* 5. 23. 1. *Pet.* 5. *v.* 10.

## *Contemp.* XXXVIII.

38. Believers are many times too like *Thomas* that would not believe without hem ight have ſomething of ſenſe to raiſe his faith: we would from ſenſe and feeling, aſcend to believing; whereas we muſt believe that ſo we may arrive to ſenſe and feeling. *I have*

*put*

*put my truſt in the Lord, that ſo I may declare all thy works, Pſal.* 73. 28. He firſt truſts God, and then finds experiences to declare. *We walk by faith and not by ſight.* 2. *Cor.* 5. 7. And therefore muſt believe in the want of ſenſe; not only rational but ſpiritual ſenſe. But how contrary do many walk to this? whil'ſt God ſmiles then they will believe he is their God; whil'ſt they find ſin ſubdued, they will believe their ſtate is good; whil'ſt they find grace flouriſhing, they will believe 'tis right and true; whil'ſt they feel Chriſt embracing of them, they will believe he is theirs; but conſider that under frowns thou muſt believe that ſo God may ſmile, under prevailing corruptions thou muſt believe that ſo luſts may be ſubdued 65. *Pſal.* 3. Under the languiſhing of grace thou muſt believe that ſo grace may be ſtrengthened, and under doubts of thy intereſt in Chriſt as thine thou muſt believe that

ſo he may be thine. I muſt not only ſay I do taſte and ſee the Lord is good, therefore will I truſt in him; but in the want thereof I will truſt in him, that ſo I may ſee and taſte his goodneſs.

## *Contemp.* XXXIX.

39. As 'tis the duty of the Saints to live by faith; ſo to die in faith, *Heb* 11. 13. The Scripture having ſpoken of *Abel*, *Enoch*, *Noah*, *Abraham*, *Sarah*, ſaith, *Theſe all died in faith.* To die in faith, is to die reſigning up of our ſpirits into the hands of Chriſt: Thus *Stephen* died, *Act.* 7. *v.* 59. *Lord Jeſus receive my ſpirit.* To die in faith, is to die believing the accompliſhment of all thoſe promiſes that are unfulfilled, relating either to our ſelves, or the Church of God. Thus *Jacob* died, *Gen.* 48. 21. *And Iſrael ſaid unto Joſeph, Behold I die, but God ſhall be with you, and bring you*

*again unto the Land of your Fathers.* Thus *Joseph* died, *Gen.* 50.25. God will surely visit you, and you shall carry my bones from hence. To die in faith, is to die believing that death is ours as much as life, or any of the good things we enjoy therein, 1 *Cor.* 3.21,22. To die in faith, is to die unto Christ; as to live by faith, is to live unto the Lord, so to die in faith, is to die unto the Lord, *Rom.* 14. 8. To die in faith, is to die not out of necessity, but out of duty. *Aaron* was to go up to Mount *Hor*, and die there, *Numb.* 33.38. And though he was in the sight of the people, to be stript of his Priestly garments, yet he obeys: It's said, *And Aaron the Priest went up into Mount Hor, according to the commandment of the Lord, and died there, &c.* So *Moses* was to go up to Mount *Nebo*, and die there, *Deut.* 32. 50. This being the command of God, he obeys it, *ch.* 34. To die in faith, is to die not out of force,

but

but out of choice. *I desire*, saith *Paul*, *to depart, and to be with Christ.* THEREFORE if you would die in faith, be dying daily by faith; get that now done in the frame of your hearts, which is to be done at the period of your lives.

## *Contemp.* XL.

40. Many would have Christ receive them when they die, that care not for receiving of Christ whil'st they live; they would then resign themselves into his hands, but will not now resign themselves unto his will: but how can you think of entertainment from him, that will not give entertainment to him? that ever he should receive your spirits, that never would receive his spirit? that he should keep that you commit unto him, that never would commit it whil'st you could keep it? This

work of committing our ſpirits into the hands of God, is not onely to be once, but often done. *David* in his troubles cryeth out *into thy hands I commit my ſpirit, thou haſt redeemed me Oh Lord God of truth*, *Pſal.* 31. 5. THEREFORE if you would have it at laſt well done, be alwaies committing your ſelves unto him in well doing, 1. *Pet.* 4. 19. 2. *Tim.* 1. 12.

## *Contemp.* XLI.

41. It's one thing to have a good converſation in the world, and another thing to have a good converſation in Chriſt. *Paul* when a Phariſee had a good converſation in the account of the world, when he walk'd according to the law blameleſs; but it was not a good converſation in Chriſt, for he was then a perſecutor of him. To have a good converſation in Chriſt requires

First

First, Union with him, implantation into him: the Tree must be good before the fruit can be good: though there may be a doing that which materially is good, upon the stock and root of the old *Adam*, yet we cannot do that which is spiritually good, till we are cut off from that stock, and ingraffed into Christ.

Secondly, A good conversation in Christ, is a conversation that flows from a regenerating work of Christ wrought in the heart, a new spiritual Man formed in our spirits, it must be a walking from a new principle wrought in the soul, call'd a *serving in the newness of the spirit*, *Rom.* 7. 6 There must be a new creation, before there can be a good conversation: we must be *created in Christ Jesus unto good works*, Eph. 2. 10. before our works can be wrought in God.

Thirdly, A good Conversation in Christ, ariseth from a good Conscience; for so the words are, 1 *Pet.*

3. 16. *Having a good Conſcience, that whereas they ſpeak evil of you as of evil doers, they may be aſhamed that falſly accuſe your good converſation in Chriſt.* A good conſcience, that is, a conſciencc purg'd by the blood of Chr-iſt through bclieving from the guilt of ſin, and cleanſed by the ſpirit of Chriſt from the power of ſin.

Fourthly, To have a good converſation in Chriſt, is to be living upon, and drawing vertue from Chriſt by faith in the whole courſe of our lives: To be ſtrong in the *grace which is in Chriſt Jeſus*, 2 *Tim.* 2. 1. and not in our own inherent ſtrength, or the ſtrength of habitual grace received; but to be *ſtrong in the Lord, and the power of his might*, Eph. 6. 10. Col. 1. 11. deriving from Chriſt as our vital Head, and quickening Principle, all life, motion, and rennewing influences of Spirit and Grace, for the carrying on of this converſation.

Fifthly, A good Converſation in Chriſt

Chriſt, is, when our Works are wrought according to the rule of Chriſt freely, 1 *Chr.* 28. 9. Cheerfully *Pſal.* 40. 8, -119. 35,-110. 3. And vigorouſly, *Rom.* 12. 11: From a ſenſe of the love of God to us, and from the flowings forth of our love again to him 2. *Cor.* 5. 14.

6. A good converſation in Chriſt is when we do what we do in the name of Chriſt, when through grace I am in the beſt frame, and am enabled to perform holy duties in the beſt manner, yet then not to relie upon them in the leaſt for my acceptation with God, but only upon the mediation of Chriſt *Col.* 3. 17. *Whatſoever you do in word, or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, giving thanks unto God and the Father by him.*

7. A good converſation in Chriſt, is when we direct all we do to a ſpiritual end, when our natural Civil, Moral, Relative, & Religious actions, are ſo directed, as God in all things

may be glorified through Jesus Christ. THEREFORE would you order your conversation aright so as to see the salvation of God? Look to this that your works be wrought in God, that is from God's strength to God's Glory. As without acting from Christ we can do nothing, *John.* 15. 5. So without acting to Christ all we do will avail us nothing.

## *Contemp.* XLII

42. We read of some that they have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof, 2. *Tim.* 3. 5. The power of godliness consists in the end thereof, the end of godliness is the enjoyment of Communion with God, and conformity to God; now to make only a shew and not to pursue this end, is to deny the power. The power, and perfection of Grace, and duty, lyeth in the end thereof, the end of faith is to purifie the heart, the end of fear is to perfect holiness, the end

end of prayer is to enjoy communion with God, and influences from him, the end of hearing is to promote faith and obedience. The end of fellowſhip with the Saints, is grow'th and increaſe in grace. THEREFORE would you be under the power of that godlineſs you profeſs? then *let your fruit be unto holineſs, and the end ſhall be everlaſting life* Rom 6. 22.

## *Contemp.* XLIII.

43. God in diſtributing mercy to his Children deals not with them after the manner of men; for if they give, eſpecially liberally, they make it an argument to withold ftom further giving; but God gives abundantly, becauſe he hath already given liberally *Mat.* 13. 12. *For whoſoever hath, to him ſhall be given, and he ſhall have more abundance.* God makes one mercy a pledg of another mercy, yea of many mercies; ſpiritual mercies

he makes pledges of temporal mercies: ſaith the Pſalmiſt *In the day when I cry'd thou anſwer'dſt me and ſtrengthenedſt me with ſtrength in my ſoul*, *Pſal.* 138. 3. From God's giving in praying ſtrength, and ſpiritual ſtrength, the Pſalmiſt concludes he ſhould be delivered from his enemies *v.* 7. And that the Lord would perfect what concerns him: alſo he gives in temporal mercies as pledges of ſpiritual mercies, yea of many ſpiritual mercies, ſo *Paul* 2. *Tim.* 4, 18. From God's delivering him from the cruelty of *Nero* he concludes, God would deliver *him from every evil work, and preſerve him to his heavenly Kingdom.* OH then how ſweet ſhould every mercie be to them: Who have through grace obtained mercy!

## *Contemp.* XLIV.

44. Many are partakers of mercy out of common providence, that never

ver knew what it was to enjoy a mercy out of ſpecial favour: but how precious is that mercy which is given in through a precious promiſe, that comes to the ſoul, not only as an effect of general bounty, but as the fruit of humble prayer! To ſuch a mercy we have a fundamental right: we enjoy it not only from God's leave, but from Gods love: *Hannah* thus receiv'd a child from God. And if you have *Hannahs* frame of heart under your mercy, you may conclude it comes unto you as a mercy; as

Firſt, If you rejoice more in the God of your mercy, then in the mercy you have from God, thus ſhe, 1. *Sam.* 2. 1.

Secondly, If in the injoyment of your mercy, you have gracious views, and admiring thoughts of the God of your mercies, ſo *Hannah* in the 2*d. ver. there is no rock like our God*, So *Moſes Exo.* 15. 11. So *Jacob* in the face of *Eſau*, ſaw the face of God,

in

in his ſmiles he ſaw God's favour.

Thirdly, If your affections are ſo ſpiritualiz'd under your mercy, that you can cloſe with a holy God, as well as with a gracious God, ſo *Hannah ver.* 2.

Fourthly, If the injoyment of your mercy, tend to the improvement of your faith; ſo it did her's ſhe believes not only for her ſelf but for others, even for the whole intereſt of God, as in the following verſes.

Fifthly, If your heart be enlarg'd to lay out for God what you have receiv'd of God: *Hannah* dedicates her mercy to God. ſhe gave up her *Samuel* to the Lord. THIS ſhould be the great care and endeavour of our ſouls in ſeeking of mercy, not only that we may receive the bleſſing, but that we may receive it as a bleſſing.

## *Contemp.* XLV.

45. That we may truly prize every mercy, and raiſe due thankfulneſs in our hearts for the mercy, we ſhould upon the receipt of mercy look both backward, and forward. If the mercy be a ſpiritual mercy, ſuch as is inſeparable from the love of God, or if it be a temporal mercy ſo ſanctified as that it cannot be ſever'd from the ſame love, why then look firſt backward, and take occaſion from the preſent mercy, to revive upon your heart the memorial of all your former mercies; Yea run it up to the Fountain head from whence it comes, *Pſal.* 116. 6. *ſaith the Pſalmiſt I was brought very low, and the Lord helped me*, and in the 12. *v. What ſhall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me?* From this deliverance he renews upon his ſoul the memorial of all former

mer mercies, *Hezekiah* in *Isa.* 38. 17. runs his mercy up to the Fountain head, *Thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption.* And then look forward, see your mercy as it is a pledg of future mercy, yea of all mercy, till you come to Glory. *David* considering his present mercy, and the nature of it; asserts, *Mercy and Goodness shall follow me all the daies of my life, Psal.* 23. *ult.* THIS is the way to raise a right esteem of our mercies, and suitable praise for our mercies, to View all our mercies flowing from that love which is from everlasting, and carried on in a blessed connexion by that love which is to everlasting.

## *Contemp.* XLVI.

46. Although there may be many good thing which a Child of God may not have, yet there is not any good thing which a Child of God shall

ſhall want; for he that hath promiſed the greater mercy, yea the greateſt mercy, will give the leſſer. This inference the Scripture warrants, *The Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he with-hold from them that walk uprightly, Pſal.* 84. 11. *And if he have given us Chriſt, how ſhall he not with him freely give us all things Rom.* 8. 32. And though it be our duty to pray, and uſe endeavours for the obtaining of what is promiſ'd, becauſe he that hath decreed the mercy, hath determin'd the means; yet having ſo done, we are quietly to caſt our care upon God: and though we may not have what we think to be good, yet we ſhall be ſure to have what God knows to be beſt.

## *Contemp.* XLVII.

As all the mercies of Believers come through Chriſt, ſo muſt all their praiſe

praiſe be rendered unto God by Chriſt. We muſt not think becauſe praiſe is a giving duty, we have leſs need of the mediation of Chriſt for acceptance, than in Prayer which is a receiving duty; but as Prayer is to be put into the hand of the Angel of the Covenant, that ſo it may be perfum'd with his incenſe, and as the Sacrifices of old though perfect in themſelves, were to be put into the hands of the Prieſt, that ſo they might be offer'd up with acceptance; ſo all our Sacrifice of praiſe, though perform'd with the beſt frame of heart, in the livelieſt manner, out of greateſt love to God, muſt be put into the hands of our High Prieſt, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that ſo they may be offer'd up acceptably to God. THEREFORE *by him let us offer the ſacrifice of praiſe to God continually, that is the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name*, Heb. 13. 15.

*Con-*

*Contemp.* XLVIII.

48. It is the great concernment of all that pretend themſelves to be the ſervants of Chriſt, to conſider what thoſe talents are God hath given them to improve, and what that Work is God hath appointed them to do. You may come to the knowledge of your talents, by conſidering what are thoſe inward gifts and graces, together with thoſe outward advantages, and accomodations, God hath given you. You may alſo come to the knowledg of your work by conſidering the abilities with which you are furniſhed, the relation in which you ſtand, the providences under which you are, the opportunities which you enjoy, and the place and times in which you live. We read of God's giving forth of talents in the 25. *Mat.* 15. And appointing to every one their work in the 13: *Mark.* 34. And of that ſtrict account which

which muſt be given up at the return of our Lord and Maſter, in relation to both. NOW wiſely conſider what God hath done for you, and what you are to do for God, that ſo you may faithfully improve your talents, and carefully finiſh up your work.

## *Contemp.* XLIX

It is cuſtomary with men, when they would dignify perſons, to attribute ſuch titles to them as are deriv'd from light as moſt ſplendid, moſt ſerene, moſt illuſtrious, though frequently miſappli'd; for how often are titles of light aſcrib'd to Sons of darkneſs? we read of *Antiochus*, that he was cal'd *Antiochus Epiphanes*, or *Antiochus* the illuſtrious, whereas the Holy Ghoſt ſpeaking of the ſame perſon (as is judged by ſome learned commentators) calls him the vile perſon, *Dan.* 11. 21. Such titles de-

cla-

claring what they ſhould be, rather then what they are. If light then be ſo glorious, ſurely then *the righteous is more excellent then his Neighbour, Prov.* 12. 26. Yea the moſt excellent ones in all the earth, *Pſal.* 16. 3. Who not only in title, but in truth are ſaid to be *light in the Lord, Epheſ.* 5. 8. and cal'd by the Holy Ghoſt himſelf *Children of the light and of the day* 1 *Theſ.* 5. 5. THEREFORE let your dignity ingage you to your duty: are you Children of the light? walk as the Children of the light.

*Contemp.* L.

50. Thoſe that walk in the paths of holineſs receive a reward not only when they come to the end of their way, but whil'ſt they are in their way *Pſal.* 19. 11. *In keeping thy commandments there is great reward*; Take the way of God as it conſiſts in the way of Ordinances, or in the way of the exerciſe of

of grace, or in the way of obedience, and you ſhall find that there is a reward in the work, as well as for the work. Take the way of God in ordinances, either publick ordinances, there is a reward in attending carefully upon God in them, *Pſal.* 65. 4. *We ſhall be ſatiſfi'd with the goodneſs of thy houſe*, &c. Pſal. 36. 8. *They ſhall be abundantly ſatisfi'd with the fatneſs of thy houſe*: Or private Ordinances, as meditation, there is marrow and fatneſs flows in to the ſoul from it, *Pſ.* 63. 6. And ſo prayer, there is ſtrengthening and quickening the ſoul meets with in it, *Pſal.* 138. 3. *Pſal.* 22. 26. So in the exerciſe of Grace, there is a reward in the work: take the ſoul in the exerciſe of faith and love, and hear what the Scripture ſaith. *Whom having not ſeen you love, in whom though now you ſee him not, yet believing, you rejoice with joy unſpeakable, and full of glory* 1. Pet. 1. v. 8. χαρᾷ ἀνεκλαλήτῳ καὶ δεδοξασμένῃ ἀγαλλιᾶσθε,

ἀγαλλιάσει, is such a joy as is expressed by outward actions, as dancing and the like; whilst the soul is in exercise of Faith and Love, 'tis fill'd with joy, great joy, unspeakable joy, joy not to be declar'd by words, a joy that is better felt, than can be express'd. A joy full of glory, or δεδοξασμένη, *glorified*, a joy of the same kind with the joy of a glorified state. By the exercise of Faith and Love, the Soul comes to have some Prælibations of that future joy which it shall have in glory. *Receiving the end of your faith, the salvation of your souls*, v. 9. κομιζόμενοι, *reportantes*; a metaphor taken as is observ'd from wrestlers that after the victory, take and bring out of the field the prize. The soul in the exercise of Grace comes to rejoice as those that have won the prize, receiving at present that salvation here in the first fruits, which shall be perfected in glory. Lastly take the way of obedience

dience as it consists in doing the will of God, and you shall find there is a being *blessed in our deed*, James 1. 25. Or take it as it consists in suffering the will of God, and you read of those that suffer for Christ, 'tis said that *that the spirit of Glory and of God resteth upon them*, 1 *Peter* 4. 14. The glorious spirit of God, in a glorious manner resteth upon his suffering ones. WOULD'ST thou then be truly happy? labour then to be throughly holy; keep close to the ways of Heaven, so shalt thou find a Heaven in those ways.

## *Contemp.* LI.

51. Believers under the Gospel have boldness, and access with confidence through faith in Christ, *Ephes.* c. 3. v. 12. παῤῥησίαν καὶ προσαγωγὴν, liberty of speech, and manuduction: Christ leads them as it were by the hand into the presence of the Father, where

where they have freedom to make known all their wants, and that with confidence of ſucceſs. Under the law only the High-Prieſt, and that once a year, was to enter into the holy of holieſt, but now the Saints, who are Prieſts unto God, may come with boldneſs into the holieſt daily, by a new, and living way, which is conſecrared for them through the vail, that is to ſay the fleſh of Chriſt, ὁδὸν πρόσφατον, *Heb.* 10. 20. *A new way*, the word πρόσφατον, is obſerv'd to ſignifie that which is newly ſlain, referring to the ſacrifice of Chriſt, as that which remains always in as full force, as if he were but newly ſlain. Chriſt through the efficacie of his blood, hath open'd a way of acceſs, and keeps it open for the Saints, as if it were but newly ſhed. And then 'tis cald *a living way*, a way wherein the Saints are quickned by the ſpirit, and through which they are made more lively,

*Your*

*Your heart ſhall live that ſeek God,* Pſal. 69. 32. THEREFORE let thoſe that have an intereſt in this priviledge come as with reverence, ſo with boldneſs, to the Throne of Grace, that ſo they may obtain mercy, and find Grace, to help in time of need. As by the aſſiſtance of the ſpirit, they will find it a living way, ſo through the blood of Chriſt, they will find it a prevailing way.

## *Contemp.* LII.

52. When you have a precept, bring that to a promiſe, and when you have a promiſe, plead it with God in prayer; and do not queſtion whether the promiſe belong to you, ſeeing you cannot deny but that the precept belongs to you, and you are no more particularly mentioned in the one, then in the other. Doſt thou think thy ſelf under the command of the word? why not under the pro-

promiſe? Thou maiſt as well claim the promiſe for thy comfort, as the command for thy duty. Or doſt thou think thy ſelf under this, or the other command? Why not then under every command, that as well as the reſt, in the 1. *John* 3. 23. And this is his command that we ſhould believe on the name of his Son Jeſus Chriſt. THEREFORE beg of God, that as he hath ſet forth his will in the precept, which requires you to obey, ſo he would give forth his ſtrength through the promiſe, that you may obey what he requires.

## *Contemp.* LIII.

53. Though God knows what we want without prayer, yet he would have us pray, that ſo we might teſtifie the ſenſe of our wants. In ſpreading our caſe before God. 'Tis not to inform him, but to affect ourſelves. Neither is prayer to be look'd upon

upon as a motive to make God more ready to give, but as a means to make us more fit to receive: 'tis a ſign the ſoul is ſenſible of the want, and worth of mercy, and that God is the fountain, and giver of every mercy, that is fervent, frequent, and conſtant in prayer for mercy. WOULD you then obtain mercy by prayer, endeavour through prayer to be fitted for the mercy you would obtain.

## *Contemp.* LIV.

54. Many deny praying in the Spirit, becauſe they want the Spirit to pray with. But that this is the duty, and privilege of the Saints the Scripture is clear. *Jude* exhorts us to pray *in the holy Ghoſt*, v. 20. And *Paul* tells you, *becauſe you are Sons, God hath ſent forth the Spirit of his Son into your heart, crying, Abba, Father*, Gal. 4. 6. 'Tis a ſign thou art no Son, if thou haſt not the Spirit of his

his Son. And where there is the Spirit of his Son, there there will be praying in the ſpirit. The ſame Apoſtle likewiſe acquaints us that the *ſpirit alſo helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we ſhould pray for as we ought: But the Spirit it ſelf maketh interceſſion for us with groanings which cannot be uttered*, Rom. 8. 26. In which Scriptures you have not only this truth prov'd that there is a praying in the Spirit, but likewiſe diſcover'd what this praying in the Spirit is.

Firſt, It implies a ſenſe of our need of the ſpirit to pray with, we know not what to pray for as we ought.

Secondly, It implies a lying low in our own Spirits, with an exalting of the Spirit of God in this work. The Spirit it ſelf helpeth our infirmities, we are not only ignorant what we ſhould pray for, but have many infirmities cleaving to us, ready to hinder prayer, which the ſpirit helpeth

us againſt, by removing of them, and diſpoſing of us to our duty.

Thirdly, To pray in the Spirit, is to pray according to the dictates, and directions of the Spirit: the Spirit it ſelf makes interceſſion for us; he makes interceſſion by helping us to intercede, framing for us regular, and pertinent petitions.

Fourthly, To pray in the Spirit, is when there is a holy longing, and groaning after the things we pray for: as the ſpirit frames our petitions, ſo he raiſeth ſuitable affections to thoſe petitions he frames, whereby they are follow'd with groanings that cannot be uttered.

Fifthly, Where there is praying in the Spirit, there the heart is engag'd in prayer; *he hath ſent forth the Spirit of his Son into your heart.*

Sixthly, Where there is praying in the ſpirit, there is fervency, and continuance in prayer, ſet forth in this word crying.

Seventhly,

7. To pray in the ſpirit, is to pray with a childlike frame of heart, coming to God in Faith, as a Father, ready and willing to give forth mercy to his Children, crying *Abba, Father.* Thus you have the Scripture both aſſerting and opening of this duty. THEREFORE have a care how you diſown praying in the ſpirit, leſt God diſown your prayers. God takes no notice of the prayers made by *Paul* whil'ſt a Phariſee, but no ſooner doth he pray in the ſpirit, but God puts a remarque upon it, *behold he prayeth, Acts* 9. 11. 'Tis ſaid of *Elias*, προσευχῇ προσηύξατο, *he prayed in prayer, Jam.* 5. 17. A perſon may ſay prayers, and yet not be ſaid to pray: 'tis only through the ſpirit of prayer, that we come to pray in prayer, and to prevail in prayer; for there can be no praying to a gracious acceptation, without a ſpirit of grace and ſupplication; neither canſt thou juſtly expect to hear the voice

of God answering thy prayers, except God hear the voice of his spirit in thy prayers.

## *Contemp.* LV.

55. We are apt either in the use of prayer to neglect means, as if God should do all, or in the use of means to neglect prayer, as if they could do all. Though God hath not tied himself to means, yet he hath tied us, but yet so tied us, as in the means he hath tied us to himself. *David* as he pray'th; so he useth the means; *One thing have I desired of the Lord* (saith he) *and that will I seek after.* The one thing in his desire was the great thing in his endeavour, *Psal.* 27. 4. *Nehemiah* and the people as they made their prayer to God, so they set a watch against the enemy, *Nehem.* 4. 9. And as we must use the means, so we must pray. *Moses* sets *Joshua* to fight against *Ameleck*, but whil'st he

is

is lifting up his hand againſt the enemy, *Moſes* is lifting up his hand in the Mount, *Exod.* 17. As 'tis not enough to pray for a mercy without we uſe ſuitable endeavors for the obtaining of our prayer, ſo 'tis not enough to uſe the means without we look up for a bleſſing upon what we uſe. THEREFORE have a care you loſe not your prayer by the neglect of means, or a bleſſing upon the means through the neglect of prayer.

## *Contemp.* LVI.

56. Many ſincere hearts fear the ſucceſs of their prayers, becauſe of the weakneſs of their faith; they have their doubts, and therefore queſtion whether they ſhall ſpeed, eſpecially conſidering ſuch Scriptures as theſe, *I will that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting*, 1 *Tim.* 2. 8. As alſo that Scripture, *Let him ask in faith*

*nothing wavering, for he that wavereth is like a Wave of the Sea, driven with the Wind and tossed; For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. A double minded man is unstable in all his waies, Jam.* 1. 6, &c. But here consider, though all kind of doubts argue weakness; yet some kind of doubts may not shut out prayer; for then how should they pray that question the love of God to them, and their interest in him? or how should they pray without all doubts of success in prayer, who have but an, it may be, to ground their faith upon? *Zeph.* 2. *v.* 3. *Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the Earth, which have wrought his judgment, seek righteousness, seek meekness, it may be you shall be hid in the day of the Lords anger.* Yet such are commanded to pray, and such have pray'd with success, saith *Jonah, I said I am cast out of thy sight, yet will I look again toward thy holy Temple,*

Jon.

Jon. 2. 4. So David, *I ſaid in my haſt, I am cut off from before thine eyes, neverthleſs thou hearde ſt the voice of my ſupplications, when I cried unto thee, Pſal.* 31. 22. The doubts ſpoken of by *James*, are ſuch kind of doubts as ariſe from a double minded man, whoſe mind is wavering, and divided between two objects: ſometimes he is for depending upon God, at other times for reſting upon creatures; ſometimes he thinks prayer to be an uſeful means, at other times not. For a Perſon to doubt, and diſpute whether God be able to help, or whether he be a rewarder of them that diligently ſeek him, or whether prayer and attendance upon God be the means to obtain mercy, theſe doubts directly militate againſt ſucceſs in prayer. THEREFORE take heed of them, and be ſingly minded, cleaving to God alone in his own appointment, as Almighty, Faithful, and Gracious; and though in other

reſpects you may have doubts about the ſucceſs of your prayer, yet come that through prayer you may have ſucceſs againſt your doubts.

## *Contemp.* LVII.

57. As we muſt fervently, and believingly, pray for our mercies, ſo we muſt diligently, and prudently, look after our prayers. *In the morning* (ſaith David) *will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up,* Pſal. 5. 3. *and I will hear what God the Lord will ſpeak,* Pſal. 85. 8. And ſo muſt we, if we would have the Lord hear what we ſpeak. We cannot expect that God ſhould regard thoſe petitions which we regard not our ſelves: many pray without ſucceſs, becauſe they mind not the ſucceſs of their prayers. And as we muſt carefully wait for an anſwer, ſo we muſt be able prudently to judg how God anſwers: we cannot be rightly thankful for thoſe anſwers of which we are unmindful, or in which

which we are unskilful: did we wisely consider the dealings of God, who hath not said to the seed of *Jacob* seek my face in vain, how might our experiences be increased, our faith strengthened, our heart encourag'd, our Communion with God promoted, and good thoughts of God preserv'd? THEREFORE if thou would'st not speak in vain to God, let not God speak in vain to thee.

## *Contemp.* LVIII.

58. God may graciously answer prayer: Though he doth not at present give in what is pray'd for, again he may presently give in what is pray'd for, and yet not graciously answer prayer. He may graciously hear prayer, though he do not presently give in the particular mercy pray'd for. God may at present delay answering our request, that so we may be fitted for mercy, and mercy for us, and

and yet give in a gracious anſwer to our prayers, by giving in praying ſtrength, believing ſtrength, waiting ſtrength, till the mercy come. Again, God may not only delay, but altogether deny the mercy we pray for, and yet give in a gracious anſwer of prayer, by giving in a better mercy. *David* prays for the life of his Child, 2 *Sam.* 12. God denies it, but gives him in a *Solomon* to ſit upon his throne. Or God may deny us in a temporal mercy which we beg, and give in the room of it a ſpiritual mercy; as under a languiſhing body, we pray for health, God inſtead of it may give in a proſperous ſoul, and ſoundneſs of ſpiritual conſtitution. Under reſtraint we pray for liberty, God inſtead of it ſets our ſouls more at liberty to run the ways of his Commandments. We pray to be freed out of the hands of perſecutors, God inſtead of it gives in the ſpirit of Glory to reſt upon us: we pray againſt

the

the buffetings of Satan, God inſtead of it gives in a ſufficiency of grace, we pray to be delivered from ſuch a temptation, God continues the temptation, *but with it makes a way of eſcape, that we may be able to bear it*, 1 Cor. 10. 13. We pray for this, and the other temporal mercy, God in the room of it puts gladneſs into our hearts, by lifting up the light of his countenance upon us, and revealing his love to us, or by working holy contentedneſs in our minds, ſweet ſatisfaction in his good pleaſure, and quiet ſubmiſſion to his will: on the other hand God may give in what is pray'd for, and yet not graciouſly anſwer prayer: as he gave the murmuring *Iſraelites* Quails, but it was in wrath, *Numb.* 11. 33. Again, upon their asking he gave them a King, but it was in anger, *Hoſ.* 13. 11. God many times anſwers the deſires of wicked men, in giving them proſperity in the world, but 'tis

in

in judgment; thereby they become more ſecure, more proud, and hardned, and ſo ripen'd for deſtruction. WOULDST thou truly judge of the anſwer of thy prayers, then compare thy mercies with thy prayers, and conſider whether the mercy thou haſt receiv'd be not the ſame for kind thou pray'dſt for, or whether it be not a mercy of a better kind. Compare likewiſe thy receipts with the effects thereof, and ſee what influence mercy hath upon thy heart, and life. Conſider not only what is done for thee, but what is wrought in thee, and done by thee. It is a ſign thy mercy comes as a gracious anſwer of prayer, and fruit of love, if thou art made more gracious by it, and fruitful under it.

## *Contemp.* LIX.

59. When the wiſe men came to *Jeruſalem*, and enquired ſaying, *where*

*where is he that is born King of the Jews?* 'Tis ſaid, *Herod was troubled, and all Jeruſalem with him.* That *Herod* who was then ſetled in the Kingdome, ſhould be troubled at the birth of the King of the *Jews*, is no wonder; but that all *Jeruſalem* ſhould be troubled, thoſe that expected the coming of the *Meſſias*, thoſe that had prayed for his coming, thoſe that looked for deliverance when he came, ſeems ſtrange; but probably they remembred what was ſpoken by the laſt of their Prophets, *Mala* 3. 2. 3. And being degenerate in their profeſſion, this might occaſion their trouble. How many pray thy Kingdom come, that would be greatly troubled at the coming of this Kingdom, when they ſhall find the wo of *Amos* taking place, *Amos* 5. 18. ſaith *Balam* ſpeaking of this day and the things that ſhall come to paſs therein. *Alas who ſhall live when God doth this?* 24. Numb. 23.

THERE-

THEREFORE be prepar'd for what thou pray'ſt, if thou would'ſt comfortably ſtand under the anſwer of thy own prayers.

## *Contemp.* LX.

60. God in all his various dealings with believers, ſtill carries on the ſame deſigns of grace; for though he change his diſpenſation, he doth not change his love; though he change his providences, he doth not change his purpoſes; though he may hide his face, he doth not withdraw his heart. THEREFORE under all the changes that we meet withall here, either from within, or from without, let us not ſay that God is changeable in his grace towards us, but we have been changeable in our carriage towards him.

## *Contemp.* LXI.

61. God is the author of affliction, not only permiſſively, but efficiently, *Amos* 3. 6. *Shall there be evil in a City, and the Lord hath not done it?* So *Iſa.* 45. 7. *I form the light, and create darkneſs, I make peace, and create evil.* Light, and peace, put for a ſtate of proſperity, darkneſs, and evil, for a ſtate of adverſity, ſo that afflictions in a ſenſe are evil, though not ſimply and abſolutely conſider'd; for ſo God cannot be the author of them, but they are evil, as they are grievous to the fleſh, as they do occaſionally draw out the corruptions that are in the heart, as murmuring, repining, diſcontent, and the like, without God overrule by his grace; alſo as they are ſeaſons Satan takes to ſet on foot his temptations in. THEREFORE you ſee what great need there is to watch, and pray, that ſo under the evil of affli-

affliction, you may be kept from the evil of ſin.

## *Contemp.* LXII.

62. As 'tis the duty of the Children of God to be preparing for affliction before they come, ſo to be improving of affliction when they are come: if we do not prepare for them; we are like to be ſurpriz'd by them and if we do not improve them, we are like to increaſe them. He that would prepare for them, muſt before hand reſign up all to God, ſtrengthen graces, ſtore up promiſes, clear up evidences, recall experiences, and ſearch out ſin. And he that would improve them, muſt labour by them to ſee ſin more and more in its filthineſs, ſo as to mortifie it, the heart in its deceitfulneſs, ſo as to watch over it; the world in its emptineſs, ſo as to be crucified to it; grace in it amiableneſs, ſo as to prize it; God in

in his holineſs, ſo as to fear him; Heaven in it's deſirableneſs, ſo as to long after it. THEREFORE be wanting in neither reſpects; for he that takes more care to avoid afflictions, than to be fitted for them; or is more ſolicitous to be deliver'd from them, than to be better'd by them, is like to come ſooneſt into them, and to lie longeſt under them.

## *Contemp.* LXIII.

63. The Children of God under their afflictions are apt to let go that which they ſhould hold faſt, to wit, their aſſurance, and to forget that which they ſhould eſpecially remember, namely, the exhortation that ſpeaks unto them as unto Children, *Heb.* 12. 5. And to put themſelves again under that Law, which they are freed from, being alwaies under grace; for though their afflictions may be materially the ſame which

which wicked men may endure, yet God deals not with them as under the curſes of the Law; for the Law is fully ſatisfied, Jeſus Chriſt himſelf being made a curſe for them, but as under a Covenant of Grace, in which ſeaſonable rebukes are promiſed, that ſo his Children may not be condemned with the World. 'Tis true, the afflictions of the wicked are puniſhments from God, as an angry Judg, but the afflictions of the godly are chaſtiſements from God as a gracious Father. Alſo the afflictions of the wicked are preludiums to their further miſery, but the corrections, of the Godly are but preparations for their future Glory. THEREFORE under all afflicting diſpenſations hold faſt your intereſt in him; call God Father in the Furnace, *Iſa.* 63. 16. and keep up good thoughts of God as to the dealings of him, and low thoughts of your ſelves as to your deſervings from him.

*Contemp.*

## *Contemp.* LXIV.

64. Under our affliction 'tis eaſier to ſee the righteouſneſs of God, than the Goodneſs of God; yet God is therein gracious, as well as righteous, *For all the paths of the Lord* (with reference to his people) *are mercy and truth*, *Pſal.* 25. 10. God in mercy is fulfiling ſome of his truths; ſome faithful promiſe for our good; and not only ſo, but his very righteouſneſs is diſplayd in goodneſs to his people, in that he will not ſuffer them to go on in a way of ſin without ſeaſonable rebukes, that ſo they may be brought again unto himſelf. THEREFORE if you would diſcern the goodneſs of God, as well as his righteouſneſs in afflicting of you, conſider not only wherein you do deſerve it but alſo wherein you ſtand in need of it.

*Contemp.*

## *Contemp.* LXV.

65. As in a way of working for God we may be inabled to do the Will of God, and yet the promiſed good not preſently be given in: ſo in a way of ſuffering from God, we may be inabled to cleanſe, and purge our ſelves, and yet the Rod of God not taken off. It was the complaint of the Pſalmiſt, *That he had cleanſed his heart in vain, and waſhed his hands in innocency. For all the day long* (ſaith he) *I have been plagued, and chaſtened every morning*, *Pſal.* 73. 13, 14. God would have our patience not only tried, but encreaſed, ſtrengthned, and perfected. And he would have us to know that both ability to work, and reward for working, both the beſtowing of good, and the removing of evil, is from grace. And as by waiting for mercy

mercy God fits us for the enjoyment of mercy, ſo by cleanſing, and purging work under ſufferings he fits us to glorify him, by further ſufferings. THEREFORE as we have need of patience, that after we have done the Will of God, we may inherit the promiſe; ſo we have need prudence, that having got good by affliction, we may glorify God with that good we have got.

## *Contemp.* LXVI.

66. As in mortifying ſin, we ſhould mortifie every ſin; for one ſin unmortifi'd, will break our peace, blot our evidence, harden our hearts, indiſpoſe to duty, make way for temptation, and diſpoſe to other ſins; ſo we ſhould eſpecially keep our ſelves from our iniquity. Though Original ſin be alike in all, yet it doth not break forth in all a like; therefore ſome ſins are ſaid to be more peculiarly

arly our ſins, than other ſins are. Saith *David, I was alſo upright before him, and I kept my ſelf from mine iniquity, Pſal.* 18. 23. As in every body there is the principle of mortality, yet in ſome there is a proneneſs to one diſeaſe, rather than to another; ſo 'tis with reference to ſin, the complection: conſtitution, diſpoſition of a perſon, may incline him to one ſin, more than another: alſo the age of his life, the calling in which he is imployd, the place where he lives, the times in which he lives, the various conditions through which he may run, and the temptations with which he may meet, may each of them draw forth ſome peculiar ſin. WOULD you then have a teſtimony of the truth of Grace, and of the uprightneſs of your heart with God, make it your work to mortifie every ſin, but eſpecially that which is your iniquity: this ſin may help you to fight againſt other ſins, but it muſt

promiſe? Thou maiſt as well claim the promiſe for thy comfort, as the command for thy duty. Or doſt thou think thy ſelf under this, or the other command? Why not then under every command, that as well as the reſt, in the 1. *John* 3. 23. And this is his command that we ſhould believe on the name of his Son Jeſus Chriſt. THEREFORE beg of God, that as he hath ſet forth his will in the precept, which requires you to obey, ſo he would give forth his ſtrength through the promiſe, that you may obey what he requires.

*Contemp.* LIII.

53. Though God knows what we want without prayer, yet he would have us pray, that ſo we might teſtifie the ſenſe of our wants. In ſpreading our caſe before God. 'Tis not to inform him, but to affect ourſelves. Neither is prayer to be look'd upon

upon as a motive to make God more ready to give, but as a means to make us more fit to receive: 'tis a sign the soul is sensible of the want, and worth of mercy, and that God is the fountain, and giver of every mercy, that is fervent, frequent, and constant in prayer for mercy. WOULD you then obtain mercy by prayer, endeavour through prayer to be fitted for the mercy you would obtain.

*Contemp.* LIV.

54. Many deny praying in the Spirit, because they want the Spirit to pray with. But that this is the duty, and priviledg of the Saints the Scripture is clear. *Jude* exhorts us to pray *in the holy Ghost*, v. 20. And *Paul* tells you, *because you are Sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your heart, crying, Abba, Father*, Gal. 4. 6. 'Tis a sign thou art no Son, if thou hast not the Spirit of his

his Son. And where there is the Spirit of his Son, there there will be praying in the ſpirit. The ſame Apoſtle likewiſe acquaints us that the *ſpirit alſo helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we ſhould pray for as we ought: But the Spirit it ſelf maketh interceſſion for us with groanings which cannot be uttered*, Rom. 8. 26. In which Scriptures you have not only this truth prov'd that there is a praying in the Spirit, but likewiſe diſcover'd what this praying in the Spirit is.

Firſt, It implies a ſenſe of our need of the ſpirit to pray with, we know not what to pray for as we ought.

Secondly, It implies a lying low in our own Spirits, with an exalting of the Spirit of God in this work. The Spirit it ſelf helpeth our infirmities, we are not only ignorant what we ſhould pray for, but have many infirmities cleaving to us, ready to hinder prayer, which the ſpirit helpeth

us againſt, by removing of them, and diſpoſing of us to our duty.

Thirdly, To pray in the Spirit, is to pray according to the dictates, and directions of the Spirit: the Spirit it ſelf makes interceſſion for us; he makes interceſſion by helping us to intercede, framing for us regular, and pertinent petitions.

Fourthly, To pray in the Spirit, is when there is a holy longing, and groaning after the things we pray for: as the ſpirit frames our petitions, ſo he raiſeth ſuitable affections to thoſe petitions he frames, whereby they are follow'd with groanings that cannot be uttered.

Fifthly, Where there is praying in the Spirit, there the heart is engag'd in prayer; *he hath ſent forth the Spirit of his Son into your heart.*

Sixthly, Where there is praying in the ſpirit, there is fervency, and continuance in prayer, ſet forth in this word crying.

Seventhly,

7. To pray in the ſpirit, is to pray with a childlike frame of heart, coming to God in Faith, as a Father, ready and willing to give forth mercy to his Children, crying *Abba, Father.* Thus you have the Scripture both aſſerting and opening of this duty. THEREFORE have a care how you diſown praying in the ſpirit, leſt God diſown your prayers. God takes no notice of the prayers made by *Paul* whil'ſt a Phariſee, but no ſooner doth he pray in the ſpirit, but God puts a remarque upon it, *behold he prayeth, Acts* 9. 11. 'Tis ſaid of *Elias*, προσευχῇ προσηύξατο, *he prayed in prayer, Jam.* 5. 17. A perſon may ſay prayers, and yet not be ſaid to pray: 'tis only through the ſpirit of prayer, that we come to pray in prayer, and to prevail in prayer; for there can be no praying to a gracious acceptation, without a ſpirit of grace and ſupplication; neither canſt thou juſtly expect to hear the voice

of God answering thy prayers, except God hear the voice of his spirit in thy prayers.

## *Contemp.* LV.

55. We are apt either in the use of prayer to neglect means, as if God should do all, or in the use of means to neglect prayer, as if they could do all. Though God hath not tied himself to means, yet he hath tied us, but yet so tied us, as in the means he hath tied us to himself. *David* as he pray'th; so he useth the means; *One thing have I desired of the Lord* (saith he) *and that will I seek after.* The one thing in his desire was the great thing in his endeavour, *Psal.* 27. 4. *Nehemiah* and the people as they made their prayer to God, so they set a watch against the enemy, *Nehem.* 4. 9. And as we must use the means, so we must pray. *Moses* sets *Joshua* to fight against *Ameleck*, but whil'st he

is

is lifting up his hand againſt the enemy, *Moſes* is lifting up his hand in the Mount, *Exod.* 17. As 'tis not enough to pray for a mercy without we uſe ſuitable endeavors for the obtaining of our prayer, ſo 'tis not enough to uſe the means without we look up for a bleſſing upon what we uſe. THEREFORE have a care you loſe not your prayer by the neglect of means, or a bleſſing upon the means through the neglect of prayer.

## *Contemp.* LVI.

56. Many ſincere hearts fear the ſucceſs of their prayers, becauſe of the weakneſs of their faith; they have their doubts, and therefore queſtion whether they ſhall ſpeed, eſpecially conſidering ſuch Scriptures as theſe, *I will that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting*, 1 *Tim.* 2. 8. As alſo that Scripture, *Let him ask in faith*

*nothing wavering, for he that waveretb is like a Wave of the Sea, driven with the Wind and toſſed; For let not that man think that he ſhall receive any thing of the Lord. A double minded man is unſtable in all his waies, Jam.* 1. 6, *&c.* But here conſider, though all kind of doubts argue weakneſs; yet ſome kind of doubts may not ſhut out prayer; for then how ſhould they pray that queſtion the love of God to them, and their intereſt in him? or how ſhould they pray without all doubts of ſucceſs in prayer, who have but an, it may be, to ground their faith upon? *Zeph.* 2. *v.* 3. *Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the Earth, which have wrought his judgment, ſeek righteouſneſs, ſeek meekneſs, it may be you ſhall be hid in the day of the Lords anger.* Yet ſuch are commanded to pray, and ſuch have pray'd with ſucceſs, ſaith *Jonah, I ſaid I am caſt out of thy ſight, yet will I look again toward thy holy Temple,*

Jon.

Jon. 2. 4. So David, *I ſaid in my haſt, I am cut off from before thine eyes, nevertheleſs thou heardeſt the voice of my ſupplications, when I cried unto thee, Pſal.* 31. 22. The doubts ſpoken of by *James*, are ſuch kind of doubts as ariſe from a double minded man, whoſe mind is wavering, and divided between two objects: ſometimes he is for depending upon God, at other times for reſting upon creatures; ſometimes he thinks prayer to be an uſeful means, at other times not. For a Perſon to doubt, and diſpute whether God be able to help, or whether he be a rewarder of them that diligently ſeek him, or whether prayer and attendance upon God be the means to obtain mercy, theſe doubts directly militate againſt ſucceſs in prayer. THEREFORE take heed of them, and be ſingly minded, cleaving to God alone in his own appointment, as Almighty, Faithful, and Gracious; and though in other

reſpects you may have doubts about the ſucceſs of your prayer, yet come that through prayer you may have ſucceſs againſt your doubts.

## *Contemp.* LVII.

57. As we muſt fervently, and believingly, pray for our mercies, ſo we muſt diligently, and prudently, look after our prayers. *In the morning* (ſaith David) *will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up,* Pſal. 5. 3. *and I will hear what God the Lord will ſpeak,* Pſal. 85. 8. And ſo muſt we, if we would have the Lord hear what we ſpeak. We cannot expect that God ſhould regard thoſe petitions which we regard not our ſelves: many pray without ſucceſs, becauſe they mind not the ſucceſs of their prayers. And as we muſt carefully wait for an anſwer, ſo we muſt be able prudently to judg how God anſwers: we cannot be rightly thankful for thoſe anſwers of which we are unmindful, or in.

which

which we are unskilful: did we wisely consider the dealings of God, who hath not said to the seed of *Jacob* seek my face in vain, how might our experiences be increased, our faith strengthened, our heart encourag'd, our Communion with God promoted, and good thoughts of God preserv'd? THEREFORE if thou would'st not speak in vain to God, let not God speak in vain to thee.

## *Contemp.* LVIII.

58. God may graciously answer prayer: Though he doth not at present give in what is pray'd for, again he may presently give in what is pray'd for, and yet not graciously answer prayer. He may graciously hear prayer, though he do not presently give in the particular mercy pray'd for. God may at present delay answering our request, that so we may be fitted for mercy, and mercy for us,

and

and yet give in a gracious anſwer to our prayers, by giving in praying ſtrength, believing ſtrength, waiting ſtrength, till the mercy come. Again, God may not only delay, but altogether deny the mercy we pray for, and yet give in a gracious anſwer of prayer, by giving in a better mercy. *David* prays for the life of his Child, 2 *Sam.* 12. God denies it, but gives him in a *Solomon* to ſit upon his throne. Or God may deny us in a temporal mercy which we beg, and give in the room of it a ſpiritual mercy; as under a languiſhing body, we pray for health, God inſtead of it may give in a proſperous ſoul, and ſoundneſs of ſpiritual conſtitution. Under reſtraint we pray for liberty, God inſtead of it ſets our ſouls more at liberty to run the ways of his Commandments. We pray to be freed out of the hands of perſecutors, God inſtead of it gives in the ſpirit of Glory to reſt upon us: we pray againſt the

the buffetings of Satan, God inſtead of it gives in a ſufficiency of grace, we pray to be delivered from ſuch a temptation, God continues the temptation, *but with it makes a way of eſcape, that we may be able to bear it*, 1 Cor. 10. 13. We pray for this, and the other temporal mercy, God in the room of it puts gladneſs into our hearts, by lifting up the light of his countenance upon us, and revealing his love to us, or by working holy contentedneſs in our minds, ſweet ſatisfaction in his good pleaſure, and quiet ſubmiſſion to his will: on the other hand God may give in what is pray'd for, and yet not graciouſly anſwer prayer: as he gave the murmuring *Iſraelites* Quails, but it was in wrath, *Numb.* 11. 33. Again, upon their asking he gave them a King, but it was in anger, *Hoſ.* 13. 11. God many times anſwers the deſires of wicked men, in giving them proſperity in the world, but 'tis

in

in judgment; thereby they become more ſecure, more proud, and hardned, and ſo ripen'd for deſtruction. WOULDST thou truly judge of the anſwer of thy prayers, then compare thy mercies with thy prayers, and conſider whether the mercy thou haſt receiv'd be not the ſame for kind thou pray'dſt for, or whether it be not a mercy of a better kind. Compare likewiſe thy receipts with the effects thereof, and ſee what influence mercy hath upon thy heart, and life. Conſider not only what is done for thee, but what is wrought in thee, and done by thee. It is a ſign thy mercy comes as a gracious anſwer of prayer, and fruit of love, if thou art made more gracious by it, and fruitful under it.

## *Contemp.* LIX.

59. When the wiſe men came to *Jeruſalem*, and enquired ſaying, *where*

*where is he that is born King of the Jews?* 'Tis ſaid, *Herod was troubled, and all Jeruſalem with him.* That *Herod* who was then ſetled in the Kingdome, ſhould be troubled at the birth of the King of the *Jews*, is no wonder; but that all *Jeruſalem* ſhould be troubled, thoſe that expected the coming of the *Meſſias*, thoſe that had prayed for his coming, thoſe that looked for deliverance when he came, ſeems ſtrange; but probably they remembred what was ſpoken by the laſt of their Prophets, *Mala* 3. 2. 3. And being degenerate in their profeſſion, this might occaſion their trouble. How many pray thy Kingdom come, that would be greatly troubled at the coming of this Kingdom, when they ſhall find the wo of *Amos* taking place, *Amos* 5. 18. ſaith *Balam* ſpeaking of this day, and the things that ſhall come to paſs therein. *Alas who ſhall live when God doth this?* 24. Numb. 23.

THERE-

THEREFORE be prepar'd for what thou pray'ſt, if thou would'ſt comfortably ſtand under the anſwer of thv own prayers.

## *Contemp.* LX.

60. God in all his various dealings with believers, ſtill carries on the ſame deſigns of grace; for though he change his diſpenſation, he doth not change his love; though he change his providences, he doth not change his purpoſes; though he may hide his face, he doth not withdraw his heart. THEREFORE under all the changes that we meet withall here, either from within, or from without, let us not ſay that God is changeable in his grace towards us, but we have been changeable in our carriage towards him.

## *Contemp.* LXI.

61. God is the author of affliction, not only permiſſively, but efficiently, *Amos* 3. 6. *Shall there be evil in a City, and the Lord hath not done it?* So *Iſa.* 45. 7. *I form the light, and create darkneſs, I make peace, and create evil.* Light, and peace, put for a ſtate of proſperity, darkneſs, and evil, for a ſtate of adverſity, ſo that afflictions in a ſenſe are evil, though not ſimply and abſolutely conſider'd; for ſo God cannot be the author of them, but they are evil, as they are grievous to the fleſh, as they do occaſionally draw out the corruptions that are in the heart, as murmuring, repining, diſcontent, and the like, without God overrule by his grace; alſo as they are ſeaſons Satan takes to ſet on foot his temptations in. THEREFORE you ſee what great need there is to watch, and pray, that ſo under the evil of affli-

affliction, you may be kept from the evil of ſin.

*Contemp.* LXII.

62. As 'tis the duty of the Children of God to be preparing for affliction before they come, ſo to be improving of affliction when they are come: if we do not prepare for them; we are like to be ſurpriz'd by them and if we do not improve them, we are like to increaſe them. He that would prepare for them, muſt before hand reſign up all to God, ſtrengthen graces, ſtore up promiſes, clear up evidences, recall experiences, and ſearch out ſin. And he that would improve them, muſt labour by them to ſee ſin more and more in its filthineſs, ſo as to mortifie it, the heart in its deceitfulneſs, ſo as to watch over it; the world in its emptineſs, ſo as to be crucified to it; grace in it amiableneſs, ſo as to prize it; God in

in his holineſs, ſo as to fear him; Heaven in it's deſirableneſs, ſo as to long after it. THEREFORE be wanting in neither reſpects; for he that takes more care to avoid afflictions, than to be fitted for them; or is more ſolicitous to be deliver'd from them, than to be better'd by them, is like to come ſooneſt into them, and to lie longeſt under them.

## *Contemp.* LXIII.

63. The Children of God under their afflictions are apt to let go that which they ſhould hold faſt, to wit, their aſſurance, and to forget that which they ſhould eſpecially remember, namely, the exhortation that ſpeaks unto them as unto Children, *Heb.* 12. 5. And to put themſelves again under that Law, which they are freed from, being alwaies under grace; for though their afflictions may be materially the ſame

which

which wicked men may endure, yet God deals not with them as under the curſes of the Law; for the Law is fully ſatisfied, Jeſus Chriſt himſelf being made a curſe for them, but as under a Covenant of Grace, in which ſeaſonable rebukes are promiſed, that ſo his Children may not be condemned with the World. 'Tis true, the afflictions of the wicked are puniſhments from God, as an angry Judg, but the afflictions of the godly are chaſtiſements from God as a gracious Father. Alſo the afflictions of the wicked are preludiums to their further miſery, but the corrections, of the Godly are but preparations for their future Glory. THEREFORE under all afflicting diſpenſations hold faſt your intereſt in him; call God Father in the Furnace, *Iſa.* 63. 16. and keep up good thoughts of God as to the dealings of him, and low thoughts of your ſelves as to your deſervings from him.

*Contemp.*

## *Contemp.* LXIV.

64. Under our affliction 'tis eaſier to ſee the righteouſneſs of God, than the Goodneſs of God; yet God is therein gracious, as well as righteous, *For all the paths of the Lord* (with reference to his people) *are mercy and truth*, *Pſal.* 25. 10. God in mercy is fulfiling ſome of his truths; ſome faithful promiſe for our good; and not only ſo, but his very righteouſneſs is diſplayd in goodneſs to his people, in that he will not ſuffer them to go on in a way of ſin without ſeaſonable rebukes, that ſo they may be brought again unto himſelf. THEREFORE if you would diſcern the goodneſs of God, as well as his righteouſneſs in afflicting of you, conſider not only wherein you do deſerve it, but alſo wherein you ſtand in need of it.

*Contemp.*

## *Contemp.* LXV.

65. As in a way of working for God we may be inabled to do the Will of God, and yet the promiſed good not preſently be given in: ſo in a way of ſuffering from God, we may be inabled to cleanſe, and purge our ſelves, and yet the Rod of God not taken off. It was the complaint of the Pſalmiſt, *That he had cleanſed his heart in vain, and waſhed his hands in innocency. For all the day long* (ſaith he) *I have been plagued, and chaſtened every morning*, *Pſal.* 73. 13, 14. God would have our patience not only tried, but encreaſed, ſtrengthned, and perfected. And he would have us to know that both ability to work, and reward for working, both the beſtowing of good, and the removing of evil, is from grace. And as by waiting for

mercy

mercy God fits us for the enjoyment of mercy, ſo by cleanſing, and purging work under ſufferings he fits us to glorify him, by further ſufferings. THEREFORE as we have need of patience, that after we have done the Will of God, we may inherit the promiſe; ſo we have need prudence, that having got good by affliction, we may glorify God with that good we have got.

## *Contemp.* LXVI.

66. As in mortifying ſin, we ſhould mortifie every ſin; for one ſin unmortifi'd, will break our peace, blot our evidence, harden our hearts, indiſpoſe to duty, make way for temptation, and diſpoſe to other ſins; ſo we ſhould eſpecially keep our ſelves from our iniquity. Though Original ſin be alike in all, yet it doth not break forth in all alike; therefore ſome ſins are ſaid to be more peculiarly

arly our ſins, than other ſins are. Saith *David*, *I was alſo upright before him, and I kept my ſelf from mine iniquity*, *Pſal.* 18. 23. As in every body there is the principle of mortality, yet in ſome there is a proneneſs to one diſeaſe, rather than to another; ſo 'tis with reference to ſin, the complection: conſtitution, diſpoſition of a perſon, may incline him to one ſin, more than another: alſo the age of his life, the calling in which he is imployd, the place where he lives, the times in which he lives, the various conditions through which he may run, and the temptations with which he may meet, may each of them draw forth ſome peculiar ſin. WOULD you then have a teſtimony of the truth of Grace, and of the uprightneſs of your heart with God, make it your work to mortifie every ſin, but eſpecially that which is your iniquity: this ſin may help you to fight againſt other ſins, but it

muſt

muſt be ſincerity that muſt helpe you to fight againſt this ſin.

## *Contemp.* LXVII.

67. Many perſons meet with little ſucceſs in their attempts to mortifie ſin, becauſe either they miſtake the means, or miſcarry for want of exerciſing faith in the means: many miſtake the means and betake themſelves to reſolutions, vows, faſtings, and ſome ſevere courſe of living; which may be uſeful in its right place, but there is a more ſpiritual, and evangelical way that we are to betake our ſelves firſt unto, namely the Blood, Spirit, and Word of Chriſt. Others though they do not miſtake as to the means, yet miſcarry for want of exerciſing faith in thoſe means. It muſt be faith that muſt apply the vertue of the death of Chriſt, that muſt fetch in power from the Spirit of Chriſt, and efficacy from the

word of Chriſt, for the killing of ſin: Faith takes a proſpect of the love of Chriſt, and of the example of Chriſt in dying, and ſo fetcheth motives from the one, and a pattern from the other, to dye to ſin from Chriſt's dying for ſin, *Gal.* 2. 20. 1. *Pet.* 2. 21. 24. *Chap.* 4. 1. Faith views the end, and merit of the death of Chriſt, which was not only that ſin might be pardoned, but that it might be mortifi'd, *Tit.* 2. 14. Not only that guilt might be removed, but that iniquity might be ſubdued, and accordingly improves it, knowing that our old man is crucifi'd with him, *Rom.* 6. 6. Faith alſo hath dependance upon the ſpirit, as a ſpirit of judgment and burning, for the conſuming of corruption, and hath recourſe unto him that ſo the heart may be fil'd with grace, and thoſe graces ſet on work for the crucifying of ſin. Again Faith helps the Soul to mortifie ſin by applying it ſelf unto

unto the Word, and the Word unto the Soul; the Word mixt with Faith hath great efficacy this way; *Now you are clean through the Word which I have ſpoken unto you*, John 15. 3. *By the Word of thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the deſtroyer*, Pſal. 17. *v.* 4. *Wherewithall ſhall a young man cleanſe his way? by taking heed thereunto according to thy Word*, Pſal. 119. 9. The word, it is *the Sword of the Spirit* which Faith is to make uſe of for the ſlaying of ſin. THEREFORE in fighting this good fight, have a care you loſe not ſucceſs for want of right means; or the efficacie of thoſe means for want of acting Faith.

## *Contemp.* LXVIII.

68. Many under long conflict with ſtrong corruptions are ready to ſay of their luſts as was ſaid of the Sons of *Anak*, who can ſtand before the Children of *Anak*, we are but Graſhoppers

in their ſight, and thereupon are ready to cry out we ſhall one day periſh by them: thus when we ſhould above all take the ſhield of faith, we are ready, firſt of all to refuſe our ſhield. But by way of encouragement in this warfare conſider.

Firſt, That all thy luſts (if thou art a Believer are already crucified in thy head. 53. *Iſai.* 6. *All we like ſheep have gone aſtray, &c. And he hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all.* There is not any one carnal affection, diſorderly paſſion, prevailing corruption ſtirring in thee, but met upon Chriſt, and was crucified with Chriſt: he dyed for it, that ſo we might dye to it, therefore we may reckon our ſelves in Chriſt to be dead indeed unto ſin.

Secondly, Conſider all thy ſins are crucified in the promiſe, though ſins may be ſtrong, impetuous, violent, yet God hath promiſed to ſubdue them, *Micah.* 7. 19.

Thitdly,

Thirdly, All thy ſins are crucified initially: there is a principle of grace implanted in thee that is crucifying of them: and though ſin may ſometime prevail, yet then thou art crucified to the love, and liking of it.

Fourthly, All thy ſins ſhall be crucifi'd totally: as they are now compleatly crucifi'd in thy head, ſo they ſhall be perfectly crucifi'd in thy perſon: as they are initially mortifi'd, ſo they ſhall be finally deſtroyed: not only the ſtirring, but the very being of ſin ſhall be rooted out. THEREFORE be ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might: though the conflict may be ſharp, yet the conqueſt ſhall be ſure.

## *Contemp.* LXIX.

69. Many ſincere Souls that have truly cloſed with Chriſt by Faith, yet queſtion their Faith becauſe they find corruption, not only working,

but ſometimes prevailing; whereas, ſay they, one ſign of true Faith is this, that it purifies the heart. 'Tis true, though Faith waſteth ſin, yet it doth not aboliſh ſin. The inbeing of Faith, doth not annihilate the indwelling of ſin, but ſin will have a being in our nature, ſo long as we have a being in the fleſh. Corruptions, yea ſometimes prevailing corruptions, have been found, not only where Faith hath been in habit, but in excerciſe: *Paul* ſaw a law in his members not only warring, but ſometimes conquering, yea at ſuch a time as Faith was acted upon Chriſt for Victory, *Rom.* 7. 23. 25. And *David* cries out under the ſenſe of ſin, *Iniquities prevail againſt me*, at ſuch a time when he lifts up his head by Faith; *as for our tranſgreſſions* thou wilt purge them away, *Pſal.* 65. 4. Thou complaineſt, and groaneſt under, and art burden'd with, and conflicteſt againſt thy ſins; from whence is this, but from a contrary

trary principle of grace? SAY not then thou haſt no Faith, when as thou art fighting the good fight of Faith.

## *Contemp.* LXX.

70. Some ſincere ſouls fear they have no Faith, becauſe they have no comfort, eſpecially conſidering ſuch texts as theſe *Rom.* 5. 1. *Being juſtifi'd by Faith, we have peace with God,* 1. John. 5. 10. *he that believeth hath the witneſs in himſelf.* If I had faith ſaith the Soul, I ſhould have peace; if I were a believer I ſhould have the witneſs of it, but I find not this: Let ſuch conſider, that though there cannot be aſſurance without Faith, yet there may be Faith without aſſurance, yea Faith not only in the habit of it, but in the exerciſe of it; not only weak Faith, but ſtrong Faith, for ſo it was with *David. Jonah.* 2. 4. *Job.* 13. 15. and other worthies: it is not ſaid that being juſtified by

Faith, we have peace in our ſelves, that we have preſently the comfort of it, but being juſtified by Faith we have peace with God, we are no longer in a ſtate of enmity, but in a ſtate of peace; there is the peace of reconciliation, and the peace of conſolation; being juſtified by Faith, we have peace with God, we are under the peace of reconciliation, and what true peace of conſolation any Soul hath, it flows from Faith. And whereas 'tis ſaid he that believeth hath the witneſs in himſelf, the meaning is not, that upon his believing it is alwaies immediately witneſſed unto him that Jeſus Chriſt is his; experience declares the contrary, but by believing he doth witneſs the ſame the father witneſſeth, *viz.* That Chriſt is the Son of God, and that life and ſalvation is to be had by him, or elſe he hath the matter by which the ſpirit beareth witneſs of an intereſt in Chriſt in himſelf, *viz.* He is juſtified, and ſanctified,

ſanctified, and made partaker of the graces of the Spirit, which if he did diligently attend, he might grow up to aſſurance, and attain unto comfort. THEREFORE try not thy Faith by thy comfort, but thy comfort by thy Faith: thou maiſt have true Faith without comfort, but thou canſt not have true comfort without Faith.

## *Contemp.* LXXI.

71. It may be with a ſincere Soul in its paſſage to Heaven, as it was with *Paul* in his Voyage to *Rome*; it's ſaid they were exceedingly toſſed with a tempeſt, and neither Sun, nor Stars in many days appeared, and all hope of being ſaved was taken away; ſo a poor Soul by reaſon of deſertion, temptations, afflictions, may be exceedingly toſſed, and neither Sun-light, or Star-light, may appear no light from graces, no light from experien-

ces no light from the countenance of God, no light from the Covenant of Grace, ſo that all hope of ſalvation may ſeem to be taken away, but though it be thus, you have a bleſſed word that directs you to ſure anchorage, *Iſai.* 50. 10. *Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his Servant, that walketh in darkneſs, and hath no light? Let him truſt in the name of the Lord, and ſtay upon his God.* God is his God as well when he hides his face as when he lifts up the light of his countenance; and though he cannot ſee that God to be his which he is to ſtay upon, yet this may be his encouragement, he is to ſtay upon that God which owns himſelf to be his.

## *Contemp.* LXXII.

72. Satan is ſo great an enemy to the Saints, that if he cannot hinder their ſalvation, he labours to hinder their

their conſolation, that ſo he may weaken their hands, and enfeeble their knees; and one way is by filling them with many doubts, and then putting them upon queſtioning the goodneſs of their ſtate becauſe of thoſe doubts: hence it too often comes to paſs, that gracious Souls are apt to queſtion whether they have any Faith becauſe they have ſo many doubts, whereas on the contrary if they had no doubts, they might queſtion whether they had Faith: if all were in peace, it would be a great argument the ſtrong man ſtill kept poſſeſſion, but that there are doubtings ſtirring in their hearts, it's a ſign there is a contrary principle thoſe war againſt, which is Faith. Regenerate Perſons are partly Fleſh, and partly Spirit, and Faith and doubts, though oppoſite in themſelves may be in the ſame perſons, with reſpect to each of thoſe parts: ſaith Chriſt to *Peter*, O *thou of little Faith wherefore didſt thou doubt*, Mat. 14. 31.

*And*

*And the Father of the Child cryed out, and ſaid with tears, Lord I believe help my unbelief* Mar. 9. 24. He aſſerts his belief, in the midſt of his unbelief, and Chriſt owns *Peters* little Faith, in the midſt of his great fears. THEREFORE have a care thou doſt not doubt of thy Faith, though thy Faith be accompanied with doubts, bemoan thy doubts, but own thy Faith.

## *Contemp.* LXXIII.

73. Some ſincere Souls are apt to queſtion whether they have rightly cloſ'd with Chriſt, becauſe they cannot tell whether it was the perſon of Chriſt, or the portion, the good that is in him, or the good that comes by him they have principally reſpected. The Scripture holds forth both to raiſe our eſteem of him, and our affections to him, and our Faith in him, *viz.* our neceſſity, and Chriſt's excellency,

excellency, the good we ſhall get by him, and the worth we ſhall find in him. THEREFORE do not fling away thy Faith upon that account: the prodigal was receiv'd though he ſought himſelf in coming to his Father, but if thou findeſt in the firſt act of thy Faith Chriſt hath not had that preference which he ſhould, then labour to mend it in after acts.

## *Contemp.* LXXIV

74. It's the condition of many Chriſtians, to ſpend that time in queſtioning whether they have grace, which they ſhould ſpend in uſing that grace they have. They think it a peece of humility to be diſputing againſt themſelves, but take heed thou doſt not bear falſe witneſs againſt thyſelf, eſpecially that thou doſt not bear falſe witneſs againſt Chriſt, and the work of his Spirit in thy Soul: the Church notwithſtanding her black-

neſs

neſs owns her beauty, *I am black but comely*, Cant. 1. 5. She acknowledgeth what there is of grace, as well as what there is of corruption: *I ſleep but my heart waketh*, Cānt. 5. 2. Again, take heed thou doſt not take part with the tempter, againſt the comforter; by refuſing the comfortable hints, and intimations of the Spirit, and in cloſing with the unbelieving ſuggeſtions, and inſinuations of Satan. Let this be thy work to ſet upon the excerciſe of grace, that ſo thou maiſt come to the knowledg of Grace; for if grace be ſtrong, as poſſibly it may be though at preſent under a cloud of temptation, or deſertion, this is the way to cauſe it to break forth, and to ſhine clearly; or if it be but little, this is the way to increaſe it, and to make it more diſcernable: but if after all this thy doubts return upon thee, and thou feareſt thou haſt no grace to excerciſe, take this advice, ſpend leſs time in

diſputing

diſputing againſt thy ſelf, and more time in addreſſing unto Chriſt, and beg of him either to clear up what thou haſt, or to work in thee what thou wanteſt.

## *Contemp.* LXXV.

75. Sometime a ſincere Soul under fears and terrors, is apt to conclude againſt it ſelf as one not paſt from death to life becauſe ſaith the Soul I am under a ſpirit of bondage, but it's ſaid of the Children of God, *that they have not receiv'd the ſpirit of bondage again to fear, but they have receiv'd the Spirit of adoption*, &c. Rom. 8. 15. It's true, at firſt the Spirit of God becomes a Spirit of bondage, convincing the Soul of ſin, and death, loading the Soul with the curſes of the law, preſſing it down with dreadful fears, and terrors but the Spirit having hereby rendred ſin bitter, and Chriſt deſirable and ſo wrought

wrought over the Soul to a ſaving cloſure with him, the Spirit of God becomes no more a Spirit of bondage. Therefore if after a ſaving cloſure with him, a perſon falls into bondage, as poſſibly he may, it's from ſuch like grounds as theſe, either firſt from the bare withdrawings of the Spirit, or from the darkneſs of his own Spirit, or from ſome impreſſions of the evil Spirit, the Spirit of God being a Spirit of truth, never declares to a juſtified perſon that he is in a ſtate of wrath, though he may ſuffer Satan, and his own heart, to work in him,(when under ſin eſpecially) ſuch miſconceptions of himſelf. THEREFORE in ſuch a condition conſider what is amiſs to mourn over it, and mend it. Be dealing wiſely with thy ſelf,but do not conclude raſhly againſt thy ſelf,for thou maiſt be as one under a Spirit of bondage, and yet the bondage may not be from the Spirit

## *Contemp.* LXXVI.

76. we muſt diſtinguiſh between a dead frame, and a dead ſtate: a Child of God may be in a dead frame, though he ſhall never be again in a dead ſtate. Chriſt ſaith to the Church of *Sardis* thou haſt a *name that thou liveſt and art dead*, Rev. 4. 1. that is in a dead frame, otherwiſe there was ſomething living, though languiſhing, which they were to ſtrengthen. *Strengthen the things which remain that are ready to dye.* v. 2. A Child of God though he ſhall not fall from grace, yet he may fall much from the meaſures and degrees of grace, from the vigour and activity of grace; from the joy and comfort of grace he may ſo fall under barrenneſs, & deadneſs, as he may be under darkneſs and blindneſs, *he may not be able to ſee far off*, 2 Pet. 1. 9. If he look backward, he may not be able to ſee the

the pardon of his ſins, and the change of his nature; if he look upward, he may not be able to ſee his intereſt in Heaven and future glory; or if he look inward, he may not be able to ſee the truth of his graces, the ſinceriry of his heart. THEREFORE watch againſt whatſoever may diſpoſe to ſuch a frame. It's ſaid of the wiſe Virgins, as well as the fooliſh, they all ſlumbred and ſlept: take heed of ſlumbring leſt thou fall to ſleeping; of drouſing, if thou wouldſt prevent decaying; and have daily recourſe to Chriſt, who came that we might *have life and have it more abundantly*, John 10. 10. Content not thy ſelf that thou art a living Chriſtian, without thou art a lively Chriſtian.

## *Contemp.* LXXVII.

77. The Spirit of God in Scripture is compared to fire: according to which metaphor I conceive we are exhorted

exhorted not to quench the Spirit, 1. *Thes.* 5. 19. That is in the gifts, graces, motions, and operations thereof, Now as fire may be quenched, checked or extinquished, divers ways, so may the Spirit.

1. Fire may be extinguished by casting upon it a contrary element in a greater proportion then it can bear, so the Spirit is quenched when we give way to the increase, growth, and breaking forth of lusts and corruptions: it's said of the Children of *Israel*, *They rebelled and vexed his holy Spirit, therefore he was turned to be their enemy.* Isai. 63. 10.

2. Fire may be quenched, or put out by suffocation, when the flames thereof may not have (through too much fewel cast upon them) a liberty of breathing: so the Spirit is quenched in its holy motions and breathings, when we heap upon them so much of the cares, affairs, and concerns of the world, as that thereby we

we choak, and extinguiſh them; thus it was with the thorny ground hearers, *Mat.* 13. 22.

3. Fire may be put out by withdrawing the fewel from it: now the Ordinances are as fewel to the Spirit, through which he works; therefore to neglect them, is a means to quench the Spirit

4. Fire may be quenched not only when fewel is taken away but when fewel is withheld: if we would keep alive the motions, and operations of the Spirit, we muſt be cloſing with them, and reſigning up our ſelves unto them, and uſing all means for the promoting of them.

Laſtly, Another way whereby fire may be quenched, is by not ſtirring of it up: ſo when perſons have gifts, and graces, and will not ſtir them up by exerciſe, but let them lie in a dull ſleepy habit, this is another way to quench the Spirit: wherefore ſaith *Paul* to *Timothy* 2. *Tim.* 1. 6. *I*

*put*

*put thee in remembrance that thou ſtir up the gift of God which is in thee,* ἀναζωπυρεῖν, (as ſome obſerve) ſignifies to revive, and ſtir up fire that is buried under aſhes; or as *Gerhard* ſaith there is an alluſion to the type of the Prieſts in the old teſtament, by whoſe dayly Miniſtry, the fire which came from Heaven was cheriſhed that it might not go out THEREFORE would you not quench the Spirit, then let all the incitations, and operations thereof not only be readily entertaind, and faithfully preſerved, but carefully cheriſhed, and diligently improv'd.

## *Contemp.* LXXVIII.

78. The Ordinances of God are cal'd the name of God: *Jeruſalem* is ſaid to be the City which the Lord did chuſe out of all the tribes of *Iſrael* to put his name there, 1. *Kings* 14.21. So *Chap.* 8.9. Therefore God promiſeth to

to be preſent with, and to bleſs his Ordinances, *Exod.* 20.24. *In all places where I record my name I will come unto thee, and I will bleſs thee.* But many are apt to complain, and ſay, they have waited long but have not attain'd this bleſſing, whereas (it may be) they overlook the bleſſing they have attain'd. Though thou ſaiſt thou doſt not ſee the glory of God in his Ordinances, yet haſt thou not felt ſomething of the power of God therein? Though thou ſaiſt thou doſt not behold the goings of God in his Sanctuary, yet haſt thou not found ſomething of the workings of God in thy Soul? Is there no warmth of heart, no ſtirring of affections, no impreſſion of holineſs, found by thee, neither in nor after Ordinances? Though thou feeleſt no ſenſible approaches of God to thy Soul, yet doſt thou not find God keeping thy Soul in a waiting, depending frame upon him in Ordinances? Doſt thou

thou not ſay however God deal with me, yet I will wait upon him, for if I have not the bleſſing where he commands it, I cannot expect it where he hath not promis'd it if I do not thrive in an incloſed garden, I am not like to grow in an open field; if I do not flouriſh, by the Rivers of Water, I am not like to proſper in a parched Deſart. Doth God keep thee cloſe to Ordinances? even this is a bleſſing, *Prov.* 8. 34. *Bleſſed is the man that heareth me watching dayly at my gates waiting at the poſts of my doors.* Though at the preſent you have not thoſe mercies you wait for, yet it's a great bleſſing to be kept dilligently waiting for thoſe mercies you deſire to have.

## *Contemp.* LXXIX.

79. Some are ready to keep from Ordinances, becauſe they cannot come with ſuch a heart as they would; but

but take heed of this: he that is unfit to day, may be more unfit to morrow; for the more way we give to our ſloth, the more ground will be gaind by our corruptions: if thou canſt not get thy heart fit, come that it may be fit. Though we are to endeavour, after a good frame, yet God would have us to know the preparation of the heart is from himſelf. THEREFORE though you cannot bring ſuch a heart as you would, yet come, and beg for ſuch a heart as you deſire to bring.

## *Contemp.* LXXX.

80, Some have too low thoughts, and others too high thoughts of Ordinances: ſome have too low thoughts, and ſay of Ordinances what *Naaman* the Leper ſaid when he was bid to go and waſh in the River *Jordan*, 2 *Kin.* 5. 12. *Are not Abana and Pharpar, Rivers of Damaſcus, better then all the*

*the waters of Iſrael, may I not waſh in them, and be clean?* and ſo deſpiſe both them and the wiſdom and authority of God in them; or elſe not contented with their plainneſs, endeavour to make them pompous, and ſo whil'ſt they think to put glory upon them, take away the efficacie of them; whil'ſt they labour to gratifie their ſenſes, hinder that which ſhould benefit their Souls. God commands an Altar of Earth ſhould be built unto him for the Children of *Iſrael* to offer their ſacrifice upon, and if an altar of ſtone, then not of hewen ſtone *for* (ſaith he) *if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou haſt polluted it*, Exo. 20. 24. 25. That which men may account poliſhing, God accounts polluting; that which they account adorning, God accounts defiling. Another ſort there are who pretend they have obtain'd the ſubſtance, therefore need not the ſhadow: they have the baptiſm of the Spirit,

but take heed of this: he that is unfit to day, may be more unfit to morrow; for the more way we give to our ſloth, the more ground will be gaind by our corruptions: if thou canſt not get thy heart fit, come that it may be fit. Though we are to endeavour, after a good frame, yet God would have us to know the preparation of the heart is from himſelf. THEREFORE though you cannot bring ſuch a heart as you would, yet come, and beg for ſuch a heart as you deſire to bring.

## *Contemp.* LXXX.

80, Some have too low thoughts, and others too high thoughts of Ordinances: ſome have too low thoughts, and ſay of Ordinances what *Naaman* the Leper ſaid when he was bid to go and waſh in the River *Jordan*, 2 *Kin.*5. 12. *Are not Abana and Pharpar, Rivers of Damaſcus, better then all the*

*the waters of Israel, may I not wash in them, and be clean?* and so, despise both them and the wisdom and authority of God in them; or else not contented with their plainness, endeavour to make them pompous, and so whil'st they think to put glory upon them, take away the efficacie of them; whil'st they labour to gratifie their senses, hinder that which should benefit their Souls. God commands an Altar of Earth should be built unto him for the Children of *Israel* to offer their sacrifice upon, and if an altar of stone, then not of hewen stone *for* (saith he) *if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it*, Exo. 20. 24. 25. That which men may account polishing, God accounts polluting; that which they account adorning, God accounts defiling. Another sort there are who pretend they have obtain'd the substance, therefore need not the shadow: they have the baptism of the Spirit,

therefore need not the baptiſm of the water: Chriſt is come unto them, therefore they need not Ordinances to remember his coming: the day hath dawned, and the day ſtar ariſen, therefore they need not the word: thus they imbrace a cloud for a ſtar, night for light, whereas the primitive Saints who were filled with the Spirit, kept cloſe to Ordinances: *Stephen* who was full of Faith, and of the Holy Ghoſt, is choſen a Deacon, *Acts* 6.5. Thoſe upon whom the Holy Ghoſt was pour'd, were commanded to be baptized, *Acts.* 10. 44. 47. And, ſaith God, I will put my Spirit within you, and cauſe you to walk in my ways, and you ſhall keep my judgments, and do them; *Ezek.* 36. *v.* 27. The Spirit of God is not given to diſcharge from Ordinances, but to fit for walking with God in Ordinances. On the other hand, as there be ſome that have too low thoughts of Ordinances, ſo there are

others

others that have too high thoughts of them; they look for that from Ordinances, which they are to have from Christ; they expect that from *Paul's* planting, and *Apollo's*, watering which they are to have from God who giveth the increaſe: in the ſixth of *Numbers*, *Aaron*, and his Sons, were by way of an Ordinance to pronounce a bleſſing upon the People, but it was God that was to give it forth, *v.* 27. *And they ſhall put my name upon the Children of Iſrael, and I will bleſs them.* THEREFORE highly eſteem, and dilligently keep cloſe to the plain, and pure Ordinances of Chriſt; but withall, expect not that from the ciſtern, which thou art to have from the Fountain, or that from the preſence chamber which thou art to have from the King.

*Contemp.* LXXXI.

81. It's very hard to be alwaies reſting upon the true foundation: we live

to much a life of ſenſe, when we ſhould be living a life Faith. Sometimes we live upon our reſolutions; as thus, it may be after ſeeking God, we have holy purpoſesin our ſouls, of walking more circumſpectly, living more profitably, and in the ſtrength of theſe we go forth to obedience: therefore God ſometimes ſuffers corruptions to prevail againſt our reſolutions, our work to prove too hard for our engagements, becauſe we reſt ſo much upon them: God may work the will, and yet ſuſpend the deed, to bring us into a ſole dependance on himſelf, *who worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleaſure, Phi.* 2. 13. Sometimes we live upon the grace we have receiv'd; therefore it often proves too weak for our work, becauſe we would be ſtrong in the grace which is in us, whereas we are to be ſtrong in the grace which is in Chriſt Jeſus, from whom we muſt receive continual

tinual ſupplies. Sometimes we live upon our attainments: becauſe we are in a good frame, and find our hearts, and hands inlarg'd for God at the preſent, we are apt to conclude it ſhall be ſo with us for the future: hence it is we may be left to ſtraitneſs, and barrenneſs, to teach us a conſtant dependance upon Chriſt. After *David*, with his Princes had offer'd largly, and willingly, for the building of the Temple, *David* makes his Prayer, *O Lord God of* Abraham *and* Iſaac *and of* Iſrael *our Fathers keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy People, and prepare, or eſtabliſh their heart unto thee* 1. Chro. 29. 18. As 'tis God that helps us with a heart to do good, ſo 'tis God that muſt ſtabliſh our hearts in ſo doing. THEREFORE take heed of every falſe Foundation: reſt not upon any thing wrought in thee, or by thee, for this is to reſt ſhort of Chriſt.

## *Contemp.* LXXXII.

82. It's the great duty of a Saint to truſt in God's Word, to keep in God's Way, and to ſubmit to God's Will, and theſe are duties that mutually promote each the other; for he that rightly believeth what God ſpeaks, will carefully obſerve what God commands, and will quietly reſt in what God doth: for though there may be darkneſs in the providences of God, yet he will ſee light in the promiſes, and feel comfort in his duty; whereas on the contrary, he that wants Faith in the promiſes, will quickly fail in obedience to the precepts, and then be apt to quarrel with the providences of God, *The fooliſhneſs of man perverteth his way, and his heart fretteth againſt the Lord.* Prov. 19. 3. He that through weakneſs queſtions the promiſe, through fooliſhneſs will be apt to pervert his way,

way, and perverting his way will be apt to quarrel with the diſpenſations of God. THEREFORE truſt in the Lord and do good, if thou wouldſt find all his dealings to be for good.

## *Contemp.* LXXXIII.

83. As we are to truſt in God alone in the want of means, ſo we are to truſt in God onely, when we abound with means. In the want of means we are to truſt in God alone, thus *Habakkuk* 3. 17. 18. Yea under the death of means, thus *Abraham*, God by his providence let the time of fulfilling the promiſe run out ſo long, till *Abraham* hath a dead body, and *Sarah* a dead womb, yet in hope he believes againſt hope, *Rom.* 4. 18. *&c.* And as in the want of means we are to truſt alone in God, ſo in the preſence of means we are to truſt onely in him; thus *Jehoſhaphat*, when the

*Moabites*, and *Amonites*, with others came againſt him to battel, though he had choice Captains, and an Armie of mighty men of valour, even ſuch an Armie for number as we read not of a greater, being eleaven hundred and ſixtie thouſand, 2. *Chro.* 17. Yet he truſteth as much in God, as if he had no Army at all: *O our God wilt thou not judge them? for we have no might againſt this great company that cometh againſt us, neither know we what to do, but our eyes are upon thee,* 2. Chro. 20. 12. 20. THIS is our duty, and ſhould be our conſtant endeavour, even in the want of means, to truſt as much in God as if all means were preſent; and in the preſence of means, to truſt as much in God, as if all means were abſent; and bleſſed is the man that in the want of means, ſees all in God, and under the abounding of means, expects all from God.

*Con-*

## *Contemp.* LXXXIV.

84. If Christians would make their work easy, and their lives fruitful, they must look to this, that the love of Christ be much in their hearts, and the work of Christ be much upon their hearts. Love is the great commanding affection of the Soul: which way that goeth, it carries with it the mind, thoughts, heart, and actions: it is that which sticks at no pains, labour, or sufferings, *Many Waters cannot quench it neither can the floods drown it*, Cant. 8. 7. *Jacob* though he had hard service, under a hard master, that chang'd his wages ten times, and though he liv'd with him long, under much toil, labour, and sufferings, *The drought consuming him by day, and the frost by night*, Gen. 29. Yet he patiently underwent all this for the love he bare to *Rachel*, and all the long time he served for

her, seemed unto him but a few days; so the love of Christ makes all the time we either wait, work or suffer, seem but little to us, 1. *John* 5. 3. *For this is the love of God that we keep his Commandments, and his Commandmenes are not grievous.* Again, would you be fruitful? then get the work of God much upon your heart: the heart of *Paul* was so much upon his work, that he prefer'd it before his life, *Acts* 20. 24. Yea is content to stay out of Heaven for some time, that he might follow it: although the fear of death was remov'd, and there was a desire to be dissolved with an assurance that when dissolved he should be with Christ, and when with Christ that then he should be compleatly happy, yet he is content to stay here under sufferings, watchings, fastings, labourings, that so he might be useful in the work of Christ; and what Saint more useful, and profitable then *Paul*? WOULD you then

then do much for God, and yet think all too little you do? then love your work and work out of love.

## *Contemp.* LXXXV.

85. As it is the duty of the Saints to walk holily, so to live comfortably: as they are to fear continually, so to rejoice alwaies: 'tis said in the 9. *Acts* 31. *That the Churches walked in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost.* If our fear were rightly exercis'd we would not be afraid to rejoice; As in evangelical rejoicing, there is to be a rejoicing with trembling, so in Gospel fear there is to be a fearing with rejoicing, and those mutually promote each the other; as the Fear of God helps us to keep up good thoughts of God under all his dispensations, and those good thoughts help us to rejoice in him; so rejoicing in God helps us to keep up low thoughts of our selves,

under

under all his dealings, and thoſe low thoughts help to promote the fear of him. THEREFORE ſuſpect that fear which hinders comfort, or that comfort which hinders fear.

## *Contemp.* LXXXVI

86. A Chriſtian though he is to caſt all his care upon God, 1.*Pet.*5.6. Yet he is not to be without all care: there is the care of dilligence, and a care of diſturbance; a care of dilligence, and this was the care of the vertuous woman in the Proverbs, *She conſidereth a field and buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands She Planteth a Vineyard*, Prov. 31. 16. This care of dilligence conſiſts in an induſtrious endeavour to provide things honeſt in the ſight of all men *Rom.* 12. 17. And then there is the care of diſturbance which the diſciples were dehorted from *Matt.*6.25. This care of diſturbance, is a diſtracting, anxious care

care both as to the purſuit, and event of things cared for: this is that which we muſt avoid: but though we are diſcharg'd from the care of anxiety, yet not from the care of induſtry: though we may caſt off our burdens, yet we may not caſt off our buſineſs. God hath promis'd to ſuſtain us in caſting our burdens upon him, *Pſal.* 55. 22. But he hath not promis'd to maintain us in caſting off our work from our ſelves. THEREFORE as one adviſeth, take as much pains as you can, and as little care as you can: be careful in your duty, and then leave all to the care of God.

## *Contemp.* LXXXVII.

87. The promiſes of the Goſpel are exceeding great and precious promiſes; precious becauſe flowing from precious love, purchas'd with precious blood, carrying with them the precious ſpirit, conveying through them

them precious grace, exceeding great and precious as those by which we are made partakers of the divine Nature. THEREFORE it is of unspeakable concernment rightly to know them, and dilligently to improve them. The promises are either absolute, or conditional; promises of grace, or promises to grace, and so are suited both to Saints, and sinners. Art thou unconverted? Then have recourse to Christ in an absolute promise, and beg grace from him who gives forth grace without condition. Art thou converted? Then thou maist have recourse to Christ in a conditional promise, and beg from him that hath wrought the condition, the grace he hath promis'd to the condition; and if thou canst find any one saving condition in thy soul, whereby thou hast a right to any one promise, thou maist conclude thou hast a right to every promise; for as all saving graces are knit together, so

all

all the promiſes goe together; hence in Scripture many promiſes in one text, are call'd but one in another, *Gal.* 3. 16. 17. Being all Branches of the ſame Covenant: and know withall, that though in this ſtate of imperfection, thou com'ſt not up compleatly to the condition requir'd, yet Chriſt hath compleatly fulfill'd the requir'd condition, and that not for himſelf, but for his, that ſo the promiſe may be performed unto them for his ſake, in whom all the promiſes are yea and amen.

## *Contemp.* LXXXVIII.

88. 'Tis the condition of ſome to ſtand off from cloſing with a promiſe, becauſe they know not whether the promiſe belongs to them. Conſider in this caſe, acceptance gives propriety: ſaith the Scripture, *Whoſoever will, let him take of the water of life freely*, Revel. 22. 17. What makes the water

ter of life thine, but thy taking of it? when a man offers me a gift, I do not ſtand queſtioning whether it belongs to me, but accept of it that it may be mine; SO, WOULDST thou know whether the promiſe belongs to thee? then cloſe with the promiſe, or rather with Chriſt in the promiſe, who is vertually all promiſes, therefore call'd the promiſe, *Acts* 2. 38. *Heb.* 11. 39. So ſhalt thou clear thy right not only to this and the other promiſe, but to every promiſe.

## *Contemp.* LXXXIX.

89. When you find a gracious qualification in your Soul, to which a promiſe is annexed, you muſt not look upon it as that which deſerves the good of the promiſe, but only as that which fits for the enjoyment thereof: qualifications do not render us worthy of Chriſt, but Chriſt worthy unto us: a precious Chriſt, would

would not be precious to the Soul, without precious Faith, *to them that believe he is precious*, 1 Pet. 2. Neither muſt you think that you can bring any ſaving qualification to the promiſe, before you have receiv'd it from the promiſer, for he that makes promiſes to grace, gives that grace to which he makes the promiſe. THEREFORE in applying a conditional promiſe, own the receipt of that good you are enabled to bring to it, and diſown your deſert as to that good you are encourag'd to expect through it.

## *Contemp.* XC.

90. How ready are many ſincere Souls when grace is high, and corruption low, to look with an eye of Faith ſtedfaſtly upon the promiſes, but on the contrary when grace is low, and corruption high, then to turn aſide their eye from them; where-

as

as this is to neglect a ſpecial means appointed for the mortifying of ſin, and the perfecting of grace, 2. *Cor.* 7. 1. Promiſes have a cleanſing, and quickning vertue in them.

Firſt, As they lead to Chriſt who is a fountain opened for ſin, and for uncleanneſs, *Zach.* 13. 1. And a vital head of all life and influence.

Secondly, As they are means to nouriſh thoſe graces, as Faith, Love, Hope, *&c.* By which other graces come to be increaſed, and ſo ſin thereupon comes to be waſted.

Thirdly, As they give us a proſpect of thoſe attributes in God his great Love, Rich Grace, Free bounty, which are his glory, *Exo.* 33. 18, 19. compared with *Chap.* 34. 6. By the beholding whereof we come to be changed from glory to glory.

Fourthly, As they take us off from thoſe things which defile, by preſenting better things unto us, and raiſing our affections to delight therein.

THERE-

THEREFORE let not the ſtirrings of ſin, and the weakneſs of Grace, be a means to hinder your looking unto them, but a motive to quicken you to be improving of them; only in this, and the like caſes, abuſe not the remedie, by being careleſs hereafter in preventing the malady: be ſure thou make not that which is thy relief under ſuch a frame, an encouragement to it.

*Contemp.* XCI.

91. The promiſes of God unto his Children are free, and therefore firm: they are free, becauſe he that promiſeth the firſt grace, finds no grace in them to make a promiſe to, and he that hath made conditional promiſes, gives thoſe conditions in the promiſe, *Eze.* 36. 26. He that hath promis'd forgiveneſs upon repentance, hath promis'd repentance in order to forgiveneſs, *Acts.* 5. 31.

And

and as by Faith we receive the promiſe, ſo 'tis through the promiſe we receive Faith, ſaith *David Pſal.* 119. 49. *Remember the word unto thy ſervant, upon which thou haſt cauſed me to hope.* And becauſe the promiſes are free, therefore firm, being founded not upon the deſert of the creature; but upon the good pleaſure of God, *Who will have mercy becauſe he will have mercy* Rom. 9. 15. *And who loves becauſe he hath lov'd,* Deut. 7. 8. THEREFORE let not unworthineſs ſuſpend the actings of Faith; for promiſes are given, not becauſe his Children are worthy of them, but becauſe they need them; and ſhall be fulfil'd, being founded not upon their mutable frame, but upon God's immutable grace; not upon what they are, but upon what Chriſt hath done.

## *Contemp.* XCII.

92. There is a very great improvement

ment to be made of experiences, for there are two things that are the special food of Faith, promises and experiences: in promises Christ is exhibited; in experiences, promises are exemplifi'd: and though we are not to make experiences the ground of our Faith, but Christ in the promise, yet we should use them as great encouragements to believing: the experiences a Child of God hath had in former times, should be improv'd for the strengthening of Faith for the time to come, thus *David.* 1 *Sam.* 17. 37. And so *Paul*, 2. *Tim.* 4. 17. &c. 2. *Cor.* 1. 10. And not only our own experiences should be attended to, but the experiences of others: the experiences of the Church in former ages, is held forth as matter of rejoicing to the Church in future ages, *Psal.* 66. 5, 6. Yea the experience of any single Saint, is matter of encouragement to the whole Church, *Hose.* 12. 4. *Psal.* 65. 4, And

as

as the experience of each ſingle Saint, is matter of encouragement to the whole body of Saints, ſo the experiences of the whole body, is matter of encouragement to each ſingle Saint, in the 77. *Pſal.* The Pſalmiſt there ſtrengthens his faith to be deliver'd out of his great trouble from what God had wrought for his People of old, 10, 15, 16, *&c.* LABOUR then to be rich in experiences, and free in the communication of them: and in a dark day when thou canſt not ſee thy own experiences to fetch relief from them, have recourſe to the experiences of others.

## *Contemp.* XCIII.

93. As ſeveral ſeaſons, and various conditions call for the exerciſe of peculiar duties, ſo duties call for the exerciſe of peculiar graces; *Eccl.* 7. *v.* 14. *In the day of proſperity be joyfull, but in the day of adverſity conſider,*

Proſ-

Prosperity calls for rejoicing in God; adversity for communing with our hearts, considering of our ways: again duties call for the exercise of peculiar graces: the People of *Israel* when they were to keep the day of atonement, they were then in an especiall manner to afflict their Souls, and whatsoever Soul was not afflicted in that day was to be cut off, *Levit.* 23. 27. 29. Godly sorrow was the grace that then was eminently to be acted: so when they were to feast before the Lord they were to rejoice, *Deut.* 12. 12, 18. *Chap.* 16. 10. 11. 14. Spiritual joy was the grace that then was to be eminently exercis'd. THEREFORE consider what duties are peculiar to the season & condition you are in, and what graces to those duties, that so you may fill up your seasons with suitable duties, and your duties with suitable graces.

Con-

## *Contemp.* XCIV.

94. That grace is of a growing Nature is out of queſtion, but how it groweth is a queſtion: I conceive it may be ſaid to grow.

Firſt, By a more firm radication.

Secondly, By an addition of new Meaſures and degrees.

Thirdly, In its livelineſs and activity; Firſt by a more firm radication, the Apoſtle writing to the *Epheſians*, *Chap.* 3. 17. That were both partakers of the grace of love, as alſo of the ſaving knowledg of the love of God in Chriſt, exhorts them *to be rooted and grounded therein*, and that in order to increaſe that ſo *they might be fill'd with all the fulneſs of God.* The ſame Apoſtle writing to the *Coloſſians*, who had Faith in Chriſt, would have that Faith ſtabliſhed, that ſo it might abound, and this by being rooted in Chriſt

*Chap.*

*Chap.* 2. 7. *Peter* alſo prays for thoſe to whom he writes, *that God would perfect, ſtrenghthen, ſtabliſh* and ſettle them, 1 *Pet.* 5.10. In the next place as to the increaſe of grace by the addition of new meaſures, and degrees, we read of thoſe that have hope, and Faith, who are exhorted to get into the full aſſurance thereof, *Heb.* 6.11. *Chap.* 10. 22. The ſame Apoſtle ſtirs them up alſo *to be adding to their Faith Vertue, and to vertue knowledg, and to knowledg temperance, and to temperance patience*; not as if they were deſtitute of any of theſe graces; for the new creature comes like other creatures into the world, with a perfection of parts, though not with a perfection of degrees; therefore as they were to add one grace unto another, by the exerciſe of every grace, ſo new degrees (I apprehend) to the ſame graces; for it follows,

if these things be in you and abound, 2. *Peter* 1. 6. 7, 8.

Lastly, grace grows when 'tis more lively, active, and operative: when Faith comes to be Working Faith, Love comes to be Labouring Love, Hope comes to be patient Hope, and Patience comes to have its perfect Work, 1 *Thes.* 1. 3. *James* 1. 4. Would you then know whether you have truth of grace, labour after growth in grace; and would you grow in grace, then be carefull that the grace you have be strengthned, and stablished, and those degrees that are lacking be supplied, and perfected, and every grace be acted and exercis'd,

## *Contemp.* XCV.

95. As growth in grace bears a comfortable evidence to the truth of it, so 'tis of great advantage as to the use

uſe of it. The Church of the *Theſſalonians* was eminent for growth in grace, particularly in Faith, Love, Patience, therefore eminent in Working, Labouring, Waiting, and ſuffering for Chriſt. On the contrary in the Church of *Sardis*, as their graces were languiſhing, ſo their works were imperfect, *Reve.* 3. 11. Little Grace is not fit for much work, weak Grace not fit to encounter ſtrong corruptions, ſmall Grace to bear ſharp trials, nor feeble Grace to wait for promis'd mercies. THEREFORE we have need to get all the Grace we can, for we know not how ſoon we may need all the Grace we can get.

## *Contemp.* XCVI.

96. Though love, or hatred, cannot be known by outward things ſimply conſider'd, *Ec.* 9. 1. Yet by a right carriage under them, and a good

improvement of them we may come to conclude that ſuch mercies come not only from common bounty, but from ſpeciall love: as thus, do your mercies tend to raiſe in you a higher eſteem of Chriſt by whom they are purchas'd, and through whom convy'd? is it your endeavour to ſee God in them, to draw neer to God by them, to enjoy God through them, to ſerve God with them, and to be thankfull to God for them? 'tis a ſign thy mercies flow from peculiar love. THEREFORE would you have a ſpeciall evidence of diſtinguiſhing love from the general goodneſs of the Lord, then fear the Lord and his goodneſs. *Hoſ.* 2. 5.

## *Contemp.* XCVII.

97. As we are to pray continually, ſo continually to pray in Faith; therefore we ſhould be frequent in pre-

preſenting to our ſelves thoſe manifold arguments as may raiſe our Faith in a conſtant belief of this truth, that God will give in a gracious anſwer to the prayers of his People. As

Firſt, There are arguments may be taken from the bleſſed Attributes of God's Omniſciency; he knows what things his Children have need of before they ask, *Mat*, 6. 7. 8. And becauſe he knows them, therefore he will give them, *v.* 32. 33. Again, from his Omnipotency; he is able to ſupply his People, *Epheſ.* 3. 20. And becauſe able, therefore he will ſupply them, 2 *Cor* 9. 8, &c. Again, from the faithfulneſs of God; the Apoſtle having pray'd for great things for the *Theſſalonians*, ſaith he, 1 *Theſ.* 5. 24. *Faithful is he that hath call'd you, who alſo will do it.* David pleads this in the *Pſal.* 143. 1. 11. Again he is ſtil'd a God hearing prayer, *Pſal.* 65. 2. Which holds forth

the inclination of his nature, and his innate diſpoſition thereunto.

Secondly, From his common bounty to his creatures, we may conclude his readineſs to hear the prayers of his Children: he that hears the cry of an *Iſhmael*, will ſurely hear the requeſt of an *Iſaac*, *Gen.* 21. 17. He that heareth the Ravens when they cry, the Ravens an unclean bird, the young Ravens that have a hoarſe voice, will ſurely hear the cries of his Children, *Pſal.* 147. 9. *Luke* 12. 24.

Thirdly, From the Covenant intereſt that he hath in his People, and his People in him, *Pſal.* 4. 3. *But know, the Lord hath ſet apart him that is Godly for himſelf; the Lord will hear when I cry unto him.* And then the Covenant intereſt his People have in him; this is frequently urg'd by *David* in prayer.

Fourthly, from the love that God bears to his People, *John* 16, 26. 27.

*At*

*At that day you ſhall ask in my name, and I ſay not unto you that I will pray the Father for you* v. 27. *For the Father himſelf loveth you*, &c. He that hath wrought all the affections that are in the hearts of Parents to give unto their Children, what they need, hath infinite love unto his own, *Luke* 11. 11.

Fifthly, From his inviting his Children unto this duty, calling upon them not only in his word, but ſpeaking to their heart to ſeek his face, *Pſal.* 27. 8.

Sixthly, From his delight in the prayers of his People; *the prayer of the upright is his delight*, Prov. 15. 8. *Let me ſee thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for ſweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely*, *Cant.* 2. 14.

Seventhly, From his erecting of a Throne of Grace on purpoſe that he might from thence give forth anſwers to his People, *Heb.* 4. 16.

Eightly, From giving forth his ſpirit to draw up their petitions for them, that ſo being fram'd according to his will, he might anſwer them, *Rom.* 8. 26, 27. *Gal.* 4. 6. He that hath given forth the Spirit of prayer, will certainly hear the prayer of his ſpirit.

Ninthly, From giving to his People the greateſt mercy, to wit, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; *he that ſpared not his Son, but freely gave him for us, how ſhall he not with him freely give us all things*? Rom. 8. 32. He that gave us the greateſt mercy before we pray'd, will not deny us leſſer mercies when we pray.

Tenthly, From his hearing Chriſt always, who intercedes for us in the vertue of his merits, whereby he hath purchas'd all needfull mercies.

Eleventhly, By preventing the prayers of his Children, giving in the mercy that was in their hearts to beg; he

he that gives in mercy before they ask, will give in mercy when they ask, *Isa.* 65. 24.

Twelfthly, From his encouraging command to ask great things, that so their Joy might be full; as if they ask'd nothing, except they ask great things, *John* 16. 24.

Thirteenthly, From his own glory, both God, and Christ, are glorified, in the answering of prayer, *John* 14. 13. Therefore God will answer prayer so as his own glory may shine forth therein; but my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Jesus Christ, *Phil.* 4. 19. Observe, God is able to supply the need of his People, for he hath Riches by him, Riches of Mercy, *Eph.* 2. 4. Riches of Grace, *Eph.* 3. 7. exceeding riches of grace, *Ephes.* 2. 7. Secondly, he will give in supplies to his People, suitable to this ability of his, this Riches of his; he will supply the need of his People, accor-

according to his Riches. Thirdly, he will ſo abundantly ſupply the wants of his People as may ſpeak forth his glory, according to his Riches in glory: and whereas it might be objected, but I am unworthy of ſuch Rich Mercy, it follows, through Jeſus Chriſt, by vertue of the worthineſs, merit, and purchaſe of Jeſus Chriſt: THEREFORE though thou art leſs then the leaſt of the mercies which thou wanteſt, yet believe to receive through Prayer the greateſt of the mercies God hath promis'd.

## *Contemp.* XCVIII.

98. The Spirit of God is a Spirit of Liberty; *where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is Liberty*, 2. Cor. 3. 17. Not of Liberty to ſin, but from ſin, *John.* 8. 34. 36. And in reference to the Law, not of Liberty from obedience, *Rom.* 6. 18. But to obedience, and

and this the Spirit worketh by ſlaying the enmity that is in the heart naturally againſt the Law, by enlightning the underſtanding in the holineſs, ſpirituality and excellency of it, by renewing our natures, and putting this law in the inward part, and writing it in our hearts, working diſpoſitions, inclinations, qualities, and motions ſuitable to it, raiſing affections to delight in it, and framing the will to an obſervance of it, whereby the Soul becomes free to righteouſneſs, and is enlarg'd to run the ways of God's Commandments, going forth ingeniouſly, readily, voluntarily, chearfully, and heartily, ſo far as renewed, to obſerve the commands of God, as of a loving, Gracious, Tender Father, who hath freed us from the Terrour, Vigour, Malediction, and condemnation of the Law; ſo that a believer, though he be dead to the Law, as a Covenant

of

of works; yet he is to live according to the Law, as a rule of obedience; though it be uſeleſs through the weakneſs of our fleſh as to our juſtification, yet 'tis uſefull through the aſſiſtance of the Spirit as to our converſation; though we are freed from it as to the irritating and provoking power thereof, it doth not ſtir up and increaſe ſin as it doth accidentally in wicked men, yet we are under it as to the directing, regulating power thereof; though we are deliver'd from the curſe of it, yet not from the command of it; though we are freed from the rigour of it, yet not from the rule of it; though we are deliver'd from the condemnation of it, yet not from the obſervation of it: 'tis that which Chriſt hath expounded, and confirm'd, *Mat.* 5. 6, 7. Faith hath ſet up, and eſtabliſhed, *Rom.* 3. 31. The Spirit of God writes in the heart, and gives ſtrength to obey

*Pſal.*

*Pſal.* 119. 97. The Saints of God delight in, and conform unto, *Rom.* 7. 22, 25. 'Tis that which is holy, juſt and good, and very uſefull for Goſpel ends, as to diſcover the nature of God, that ſo we may be holy, as he is holy; to diſcover the excellency of Chriſt, who hath brought in everlaſting righteouſneſs anſwerable to the perfection of the Law, that ſo we may value and eſteem it. To diſcover our ſins, and imperfections, that ſo we may be humbled for them, and be mortifying of them, and to live more in communion with the power, and ſtrength of Chriſt, without whom we can do nothing, and through whom we are inabled to do all things. 'Tis that in obedience whereof we are to teſtifie our thankfulneſs for Grace receiv'd, and by obedience whereunto we are to be fitted for the glory which is to be reveal'd.

THEREFORE from a Spirit of liberty

berty as your principle, go forth to an evangelical obſervance of the Law as your duty, *James* 2. 12.

## *Contemp.* XCIX.

99. As in order to a Soul's coming unto Chriſt, there is an abſolute neceſſity of the teachings of God; therefore ſaith Chriſt out of the Prophets, *They ſhall be all taught of God*, John 6. 45. So alſo there is the like neceſſity in order to the Soul's building up in Chriſt, not as if there was no need of a Goſpel Miniſtry herein, for Chriſt hath appointed it as long as any Saint ſhall want edifying, and perfecting, *Eph.* 4. 12. So that we are not to underſtand this inward teaching in oppoſition to outward teaching, as if it was to exclude it, but as that which doth excell it. And indeed 'tis that which hath a tranſcendent excellency in it,

for

for God is ſuch a teacher as there is none like him, and that in divers reſpects.

Firſt, Men, though they may be willing to teach, yet it often ſo falls out, that they cannot make their Scholars willing to learn; but 'tis otherwiſe with God, as he teacheth what he would have us to learn; ſo he makes us willing to learn what he teacheth, *Pſal.* 25. 4. *Pſal.* 143. 10.

Secondly, Though men may have Scholars that are willing to learn, yet they cannot give them an underſtanding to take in that learning to which they have a will, but God doth not only preſent rules to be underſtood by us, but gives us an underſtanding to apprehend thoſe rules, 1 *John* 5. 20. 2 *Tim.* 2. 7.

Thirdly, Though men may teach, and their Scholars apprehend what is taught, yet they cannot give them hearts to cloſe with what they apprehend

hend; but God, as he gives an underſtanding to know truth, ſo a heart to affect, and receive what is known. The two Diſciples ſaid, *Did not our heart burn within us while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?* Luke 24. 32. *So God opened the heart of Lydia, to attend to the things which were ſpoken of* Paul, Acts 16. 14. *God puts his law into the inward part, and writes it in the heart,* Jer. 31. 33.

Fourthly, Men, though they may teach, and the hearts of their Scholars cloſe with what is taught, yet they may want ability to practice that which they cloſe with; but God doth not only open the heart to receive truth, but ſtrengthens the Soul to practice what it ſo receives; as he puts his law in the inward part, ſo likewiſe his *Spirit, and cauſeth the Soul to walk in his ways.* Eze. 36.27.

THEREFORE as you muſt attend dili-

diligently upon the Preaching of the word, ſo you muſt pray earneſtly to be taught of God; for 'tis only thoſe can profit by teaching, whom God teacheth to profit.

## *Contemp.* C.

100. As all the Saints of God are his firſt born, *Heb.* 12.23. *Jer.*31.9. *Ex.* 4. 32. So all the Saints of God are heirs, and this ariſeth from that near union that they have with Chriſt; for being members of him, they make but one body with him, and ſo come to partake of the ſame love, and to be inveſted with the ſame priviledges: is he God's firſt born? *Rom.* 8. 29. ſo are they; is he an heir? ſo are they; *And if Children, then heirs, heirs of God and joynt heirs with Chriſt*, v. 17. They are heirs of God, not only effective, made heirs by God, but objective. God him-

himſelf their inheritance, *I am thy exceeding great reward, ſaith God to Abraham*, Gen. 15. 2. He doth not ſay, I will give thee a reward, but I my ſelf will be thy reward; he that is the ſupreme, pure, perfect, infinite, everlaſting good, is the portion of his People, he that is the fountain, original good, from whence is all good, *bonum in quo omnia bona*, that good, in whom is all good, is their inherritance, neither doth it leſſen their inheritance, becauſe ſo many ſhare in it; for if every man enjoy as much of the Sun, which is but a finite good, as if there were no more to enjoy it but himſelf, how much more ſhall each Saint enjoy as much of God. who is an infinite good, as if no other Saint was to inherit with him. Well might the Pſalmiſt ſay in conſideration of God's being his portion, *The lines are fallen unto me in pleaſant places, yea I have a goodly*

*goodly heritage*, Pſal. 16. 6. And *Jacob* ſay to *Eſau* יֶשׁ־לִי־כֹל Gen. 33. 11. *I have all*, for he that inherits God, inherits all things, *Rev.* 21. 7. THEREFORE if God be thy portion, thou haſt unſpeakable cauſe to be thankfull to him, to be ſatisfi'd with him, and to rejoice in him; for if God himſelf can make thee happy, thou ſhalt be happy.

---

# FINIS

---

BRITISH
MODE 74
MUSEUM